The Misty Pathway

By FLORENCE RIDDELL

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INSTALLMENT I.

A Modern Cinderella.

"MY godfathers!" Richenda Peterson's tea cup clattered suddenly down on her breakfast tray with a terrific rattle as she scanned the amazing letter which trembled between her agitated fingers. "My godfathers!"

The mists of sleep had been heavy on those wide, dark eyes but a few moments before, when, hard upon 10 chimes from a nearby tower, the small maid of the Bloomsbury boarding house had insinuated herself through the narrow doorway bearing the morning meal with its accompaniment of a solitary large white envelope, which bore a printed Fleet street address on its back.

Ten o'clock! It was not often that a week day found Richenda breakfasting in bed and at such an advanced

"MY GODFATHERS!" SAID RICHENDA PETERSON FOR THE THIRD TIME.

hour of the morning, but, as her Summer holiday had been unduly shortened by the illness of her immediate superior in the city office where she spent her busy days, Richenda had arranged to take the week's leave which was still due to her in odd bits during the Autumn.

Today was one of the bits and Gladys Ann had been given strict orders the previous night not to wake Richenda a single minute before 10 o'clock. She wished to take full advantage of this lazy morning.

At first she had not noticed the letter. The room was cold, so she had turned on the little gas fire, donned a fur-bordered dressing jacket and a rose-hued boudoir cap (Richenda loved color) and slipped back to her warm bed, preparatory to tackling the bacon and tomatoes which formed her favorite breakfast. She would have liked mushrooms and kidneys as well, but, as she philosophically decided, one must subdue mushroom and kidney inclinations when one has only a boiled-egg income!

And now the hot tomatoes were becoming duller in hue, the bacon a little cold and gray, and Richenda, her lacy cap suddenly shot to the back of her head as she ran puzzled fingers through her disordered thatch of rioting short hair, was sitting bolt upright, away from the comfortably arranged bank of pillows at her back, mouth agape, eyes wide in amazement—gasping.

Of course it couldn't be! There was some mistake. She hadn't even bothered to consider those silly industries properly. She had just put the 15 names on paper and dabbed a pin at them, chanting childlishly: "Ena, deena, dinah doh, catch a nigger by his toe * * *" until she had one by one reduced them to the numbered order decided by the old rhyme. Then she had sent the list, accompanied by a 5-shilling postal order, up to the newspaper office. And now—this marvelous letter!

The words danced up to her amazed eyes again:

"* * * glad to inform you that you are adjudged the winner of the first prize of £5,000 (five thousand pounds) in our Blind Ballot competition. As no other competitor gave exactly the same order of industries, the prize is undivided and goes wholly to you."

Five thousand pounds! Five thousand pounds! Five thousand pounds!

"My godfathers!" said Richenda Peterson for the third time.

She hurled herself off the bed in a gasping heap, her meal untasted, delved hurriedly into the drawer that held her extra specially fine set of pink crepe de chine undies, did some hurried splashing at the tiny washstand, wrested her newest gray costume—which was some eight months

old—from its hook, dabbed a thistle-down powder puff over her features—excitement makes the nose so shiny—crammed a red felt hat on her excited head, grabbed a purse in one hand and gloves in the other, slammed the door and shot down the narrow stairway like a miniature whirlwind. For the first time in her life she didn't stop to turn off the fire—and there was still a penny-worth of unconsumed gas to run through the meter pipe. Reckless Richenda! But who stops to catch a mouse when they are intent on hunting elephant?

Richenda was after that £5,000 before it melted into thin air!

Was ever bus so slow—did ever the careful old ladies take so long to cross the road? And the wretched driver! Chattering to the conductor when he should be getting on—on.

Fleet street must be miles away still! And her £5,000! She'd never be

able to breathe evenly again until she'd really—really got it!

She wanted to tell somebody about it—to tell everybody—she wanted to sing it to the heavens—to yell with the whole force of her lungs, "I've

won five thousand pounds! I've won five thousand pounds!"

That woman on the opposite seat with the imitation sables, what would she say if she knew? Richenda's mouth opened: "D'you know I've won —I've—that is, how long this bus takes to get to Fleet street?"

A cold blue eye regarded her calmly. "I don't. I would suggest that you inquire of the conductor."

Richenda shrank considerably smaller for a moment, then expanded again suddenly.

A swirl of red hat and gray shoes, a flurry of fox stole, a shrill "Hey, taxi!" and Richenda was sitting back on shiny leather cushions—still gasping.

"Mad!" said the conductor of the deserted bus. "Poor young thing!"

"Drunk!" said the lady of the sables. "Perfectly abominable!"

And both of them were, up to a point, quite right, for great and sudden joy is known to have an unbalancing and intoxicating effect.

But Richenda, singing shrilly in the seclusion of the taxi, did not care what people thought, for the burden of her song was: "I've won five thousand pounds!"

More than one passerby shot a curious glance at that excited face. A strong young face it was, handsome—the world is old-fashioned, but somehow pretty or even lovely did not suit the girl so well—handsome in a half boyish way. Her skin might once have been fair, but now it was tanned to a delicate bronze, through which a red flush of perfect health

rose on her gently curved cheek. The rather wide red mouth, finely cut and sensitive, was usually held in lines of strong repression—lines which could suddenly break into infectious laughter that brought unexpected dimples in its train, dimples which, one would have thought, could not lurk about the lips of this young Venus of the rather solemn expression and the brooding dark eyes. But rebellion sang from the rioting waves of her dark bobbed hair; self-will spoke in the set of her slim shoulders, a sense of humor proclaimed itself from the faint network of lines around both mouth and eyes, and strength showed in every line of her slender figure. And behind all lay a feminine allure of which Richenda Peterson herself was never conscious.

Imaginative and idealistic, she sought to model herself on the calculating, businesslike young woman of today—sought thus, and, as far as the outside world could judge, succeeded. But deep in her 26-year-old heart there were smoldering fires, the existence of which so far nobody who knew her had ever guessed—ideals, hopes, strange, restless longing that she could not put into words.

"Life is going to mean something to me," she told herself, "something wide—big—tremendous! It must. It must!"

(Continued tomorrow.)

SYNOPSIS.

Richenda Peterson, a London office girl, awakes one morning to learn that she has won first prize in a newspaper contest. The prize amounts to £5,000.

The first installment of this exciting story was published yesterday. Start to read it today.

(Continued from Yesterday's Star.)

INSTALMENT II.

Like a Fairy Tale.

ARRIVED at the office of the Daily Onlooker, she drilled herself to more dignified composure, paid the taxi driver, adding a tip which made him gasp in sheer amazement, and walked with quick steps into the dingy Fleet street doorway.

Oh, it was hard to set her feet steadily down on the stone floor of the dimly-lighted passage. She wanted to dance. But had anybody ever danced in a newspaper building before?

Rough wooden floors, cobwebby, dark distempered walls, gloomy windows, dingy messenger boys gathered in chattering knots on shaky schoolroom forms, a guardian of the sacred precincts shut up in a sort of telephone box boring a pair of sergeant-major eyes critically at her, pushing a slip of paper and a stub of pencil over for her to write her name and business—no, not even a new young millionaire would dance here!

Then she was alone in the cubicled waiting room, rustling the sheets of the morning's issue of the Onlooker as the minutes dragged past.

Then she was walking through a tremendously large room, steering her way between rows of tables and desks, at each of which sat some busy creature bent over a pile of papers. From

somewhere a little farther away came the roar of machinery. Nearer at hand typewriters clicked busily.

And now a small, quieter room, a man looking quizzically at her with shrewd eyes from behind his horn-rimmed glasses.

And: "I'm Richenda Peterson," she said. "I've won £5,000 in the ballot competition. I've come to know how soon it will be convenient for you to let me have it."

The man laughed amusedly.

"Sit down, Miss Peterson," he said kindly. "But I'm afraid we can't make a five minutes' business of this, you know."

They certainly did not. Richenda spent the morning in a whirl. They wanted to know such a lot of things. What was her profession? Where did she work? How old was she? Where was she born? Then—worse

And now a small, quieter room, a man looking quizzically at her with shrewd eyes from behind his horn-rimmed glasses.

than ever—couldn't she write an article for them—"How I Received News of My Great Good Luck" or "What I Mean to Do With My Five Thousand Pounds"?

Oh, no, no, she had never written a newspaper article in her life! Well, then, if Miss Peterson would be kind enough to give them all information——

A bespectacled youth with a shorthand notebook was summoned and Richenda mechanically answered his fire of rapid questioning.

Then, with her head still swirling, away to a glass-roofed miniature studio near the sky to pose for half a dozen photographs. Hat on—click; hat off—click; now laugh—ah, wider, as if you're thoroughly delighted: this Richenda found easy. Now serious,

dreamy. She cocked an eye heavenward. Now pensive, mischievous. Full face, profile—click, click, click. She was glad when the ordeal was over.

"I'm sure I must look a frightful lunatic in all of them," she said.

"Richenda, it is like a fairy tale!"

"O Dickie, you lucky little devil!"

Some nine hours after the sudden arrival of that amazing letter two other girls stood with Richenda in her little bed-sitting room and gazed across at the delighted young prize winner with marveling eyes, in one pair of which could be seen traces of innocent envy. Good, kind girls both these were, for all a certain modern cynicism of the younger and the dull, staid outlook of the other. Their lives ran in a narrow circle. Kathleen Adams, with her hardly won dispenser's certificate, was getting a little tired of the constant filling of bottles. Jean Anderson of 29 Winters (some five years older than Kathleen), had already passed the restless stage and had settled down in her own little millinery business prepared to go on steadily trimming hats—this year, next year, sometimes, anyways . . . trimming hats!

In character the three girls were leagues apart from each other. Perhaps their diverseness was the very force which cemented their friendship so firmly.

Kathleen and Jean had fallen into the habit of drifting after each evening's meal from the musty-smelling sitting room of the boarding house where all three dwelt up to the cretonne-hung freshness of Richenda's little bed-sitting room.

"The three glacial graces," a masculine would-be wit of the lounge below had dubbed them, ending with: "And the black-eyed girl with the wild hair is the iciest of the lot."

"Said her father was an Indian army officer," sniffed pert femininity at his elbow. "Such airs!"

And Richenda, in an indiscreet moment, before she became familiar with the hostile attitude that thrives so rapidly in a suburban boarding house, before she had learned its little digs of sarcasms, its small jealousies, had said this. Innocently enough, of course, because her information was authentic. James Peterson had been an officer in the Indian army; moreover, Mary Peterson, his wife, had been the only daughter of an archdeacon. But they had died long ago, in the girl's infancy, and now every other relative of Richenda's was the other side of the deep abyss as well.

Unfortunately, too, James Peterson had been fond of speculation and the pen of Fate had been as quick to write "Finis" to his money as it had been to write it to his life.

The spinster aunt who had taken the motherless child had died five years before and the little annuity on which she existed ceased at her death, so Richenda Peterson stood alone in the world, dependent almost entirely on what she herself could earn.

Sometimes the very precariousness of her life frightened Richenda. There might be things to face in the future . . . illness . . . poverty . . .

Yet Kathleen and Jean were in the same boat—almost. True, Kathleen had a wealthy aunt and Jean had a home, a mother and four young sisters somewhere. Neither girl was so curiously alone as Richenda Peterson.

But neither had the amount of imagination with which Richenda was burdened. They did not expect life to yield them all the color and change she had always felt that it might be made to yield for her.

"But, Richenda, what are you going to do with it?" Jean asked for the fifth time the following evening as the three girls sat by her gas fire with a dozen copies of the Daily Onlooker strewn about them.

Here was a 4-inch square representation of "Miss Peterson reading letters of congratulation."

"And I haven't had any yet," she giggled.

There "Miss Peterson in a dainty corner of her own sanctum."

"A musty couch with a couple of cushions and a flower pot brought in from the editor's office," she said.

"Miss Peterson, whose profile once won first prize in a beauty competition."

"The Church Bazaar, my dears! We all went in for fun and I got the half guinea."

The three tongues clacked excitedly for a while. Then Jean's sober mind prompted her yet again to repeat the question:

"But what are you going to do with it, Richenda?"

(Continued in Tomorrow's Star.)

INSTALLMENT III.

Second Sight.

DICK'S little white teeth gleamed through her lilting laugh.

"Girl," she breathed, "the day I get the money we'll have a most 'tremendous' dinner at the Savoy, stalls at the Gaiety, three new evening frocks—turquoise blue for you, Kit-cat, rose du Barri for Jean, jade green for me. Yes, jade green, with bunches of misty purple grapes. I've seen it in Regent street, and silver shoes and . . ."

"Thanks, Dickie darling, you can supply the dinner and the stalls, but we'll buy our own frocks." Jean's kind eyes were a little misty. "You know £5,000 won't go so far as you imagine.

"Now," she went on soberly, "I would suggest War Loan . . .

"Oh, Jeanette, how depressing!" Kathleen broke in.

"It will bring in at least £5 a week and . . ."

"To Jerusalem with £5 a week!" Richenda's voice rang out upon them. "Who wants five nasty, respectable, uninteresting pounds a week? Not I! I'm going to have the whole 5,000!" She laughed wickedly through the amazed silence which followed her words.

"But, oh, Richenda," Kathleen Adams gasped in a thrilled whisper, "you don't mean that you are going to spend it!"

"But, Richenda, you couldn't . . ."

"It would be wicked . . ."

"Perfectly prodigal!"

"GIRLS, I'M A SUPERSTITIOUS OWL," SHE SAID.

"I never heard of such a thing!"

"And what'll you do when you get to the end of it?"

"Have you quite finished, my children?" said Richenda calmly. "Yes—then, girls, I'm going to spend it!"

"But how?"

"Well, first, by giving you two darling things a hundred each!"

"What nonsense!"

"As if we'd take it!"

"And next—oh, girls, it thrills me to the soul—next, by doing the one thing I've longed to do all my life." She leaped suddenly to her feet, pirouetted wildly around a table, and turned on them with wide flung arms. "I shall travel."

Excitement shone in all three pairs

of eyes now. Kathleen and Jean had caught some of the infection of Richenda's jubilation and leaned forward a little breathlessly

"Where?" they asked together.

"Where? Oh, everywhere! Places where the sun shines on hot gold desert sand, places where dark jungle runs down to palm fringed shores, places where snow capped, unexplored mountains cut up to a tropic sky. Those are the sorts of places I want to see. Oh—not Monte Carlo with its gaming tables, not Deauville with its bath gown wrapped men and its pyjamaed actresses posing for newspaper cameras on the seashore, not Paris with its tinsel boulevards and its leering Frenchmen. Not these. But all those other queer, wild, unwritten places where the sun shines hot and strange beasts lurk in black jungle. Those are the places I've longed to see—the places that £5,000 are going to let me see; Oo-oo," she exclaimed fiercely. "I've been the correct secretary stenographer-typist long enough! I've been the

average conventional young woman a sight too long! Now I'm going to be just the elemental Richenda Peterson that's never dared to reveal herself before!"

"Dickie, how lovely!" breathed a shining eyed Kathleen.

"Richenda, you're mad!" chided Miss Anderson.

But, mad or sane, Richenda stuck to her point. No—she would not save her cake. She would eat it—eat it and enjoy it and—devil the years that followed after!

"Well," said Miss Adams suddenly, "I suppose that now you will put an end forever to the love lorn aspirations of John Charteris?"

"Oh," replied Richenda, growing a little pink, "I told John long ago that I could never marry him!"

"My child, perhaps some day when you have discovered that the wide world is not so wonderful as you thought it might be and that five thousand pounds will not keep you for a lifetime and that, in these days, there isn't a handsome prospective husband waiting for you round every corner, you may yet be glad to come home and lay your head on the comfortable, tobaccoey shoulder of the worthy John!" Kathie's lips curled a little sarcastically now.

"I shan't, Kit, you little beast!" flared Richenda. "You know I will never marry John. I don't love him! Oh," she went on, with heightened color, "when I marry I want to feel driven to it . . . urged . . . compelled by a great wave of fire in my heart. I want to meet my man fifty-fifty. I want Love—with a capital L, passion, too, everything that counts! And John is not the kind of a man to whom I could give all that!"

"Then what kind of a man could you give it to?" asked Kathleen.

Richenda's cheeks flushed now to burning crimson.

"What kind of a man?" Kathleen fired the question again, then gazed in surprise at a strange new something in Richenda's face which held her attention, sat bold upright with her eyes suddenly brightening in fresh interest.

"Oh," Richenda began, broke off, laughed nervously, then: "Girls, I'm a superstitious owl," she said.

"My friends, there is more in this than meets the eye," observed the shrewd Miss Anderson.

Kathleen was smiling mischievously now. She drew Richenda suddenly down into the cretonne covered armchair by the little gas fire, placed herself on a squat footstool on the hearthrug, arms linked round her ankles, chin resting on her knees, her fair head cocked to an angle at which she could gaze straight into Richenda's eyes.

"The trinity always plays fair, Dick," she observed softly. "Who is he? What is he like? Where did you meet him?"

The dark girl laughed. "You two will think me mad," she began. "I can't give you the answer to the first question, for I simply don't know who he is."

They gasped, and she went on hastily: "But he's awfully nice to look at." She paused thoughtfully for a moment, then went on again: "He's got a wonderful face—I can't describe how wonderful—it is lean and brown and finely cut with a firm, rather thin lipped mouth and a pair of keen eyes under heavy black brows—eyes that could make ice itself flame with fire."

Kathleen had found her voice again now: "Name! Name!" she demanded.

"I—don't—know."

"Oh, Richenda," Jean's tones were disapproving, "have you met him?"

"Yes."

"Dick Peterson, you are not playing fair. Tell us all about it this very minute!"

"Girls," Richenda's voice was halting still, "you'll think me an idiot, but—but," words rushed suddenly quicker now—"it's in my dreams. I see that face every few nights lately. He comes—often. . . .

"What does it mean?" her breath drew inward with a little frightened gasp. "I've never seen anybody like him in real life. Why does he come to me now—and so often—more than ever since John Charteris first asked me to marry him? I can't understand it. You know, before Aunt Agnes died, I had dreams—warnings. I knew something was going to happen. I've got this awful thing people call second sight. You know that. . . ."

They nodded silently.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT IV.

Young Blood.

EACH knew that sometimes Richenda had queer premonitions of coming good or evil. That night when old Col. Galbraith, down on the first floor, had died of sudden heart failure, for instance, hadn't Richenda told them before it happened that some spirit of unrest was hovering about the house? And that other time, before the big thunderstorm came . . . the thoughts of each girl went off on a different track.

"It means something, girls," Richenda was saying now. "If only I could find out what it does mean. Sometimes I've thought he is trying to tell me not to marry John Char-

teris—to—to wait a little longer. Oh, dear, my dears, do you think I'll ever meet him in the flesh—my man with the compelling eyes——?"

She halted suddenly, sat forward a little, lips parted, breath coming in long gasps.

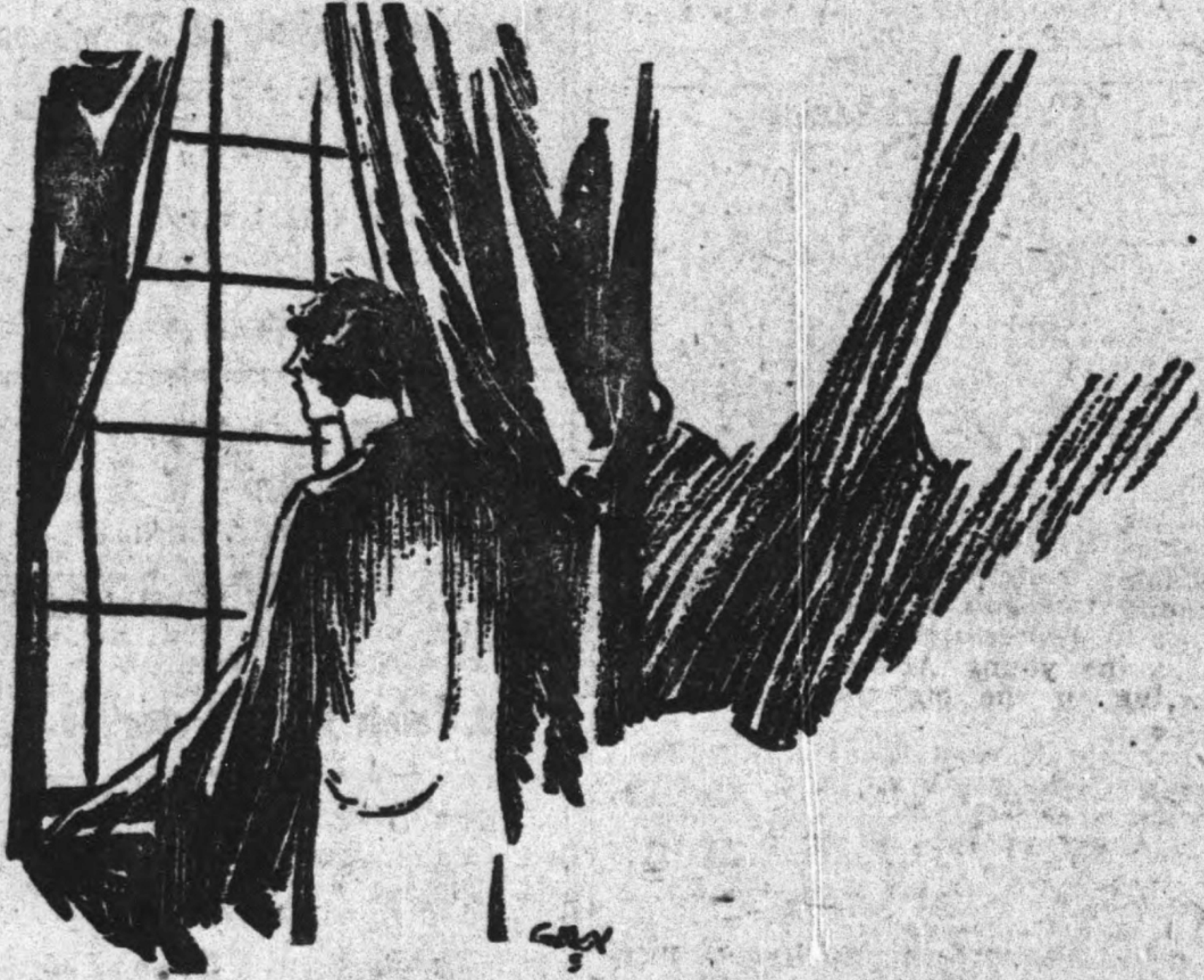
"It might be your liver," suggested prosaic Jean. "Have you been careful what you eat at lunchtime, Richenda? Too many sugary cakes, too much——"

"If you ever do meet him, Dick," Kathleen broke in, "you'll probably find him married to a fat wife with six nasty overfed children to buy shoe leather for! Life's like that," she ended wryly.

Richenda laughed. "Well, children," she said shyly, "that's why I can't say 'yes' to dear old John. It's darn silly when you come to think about it, isn't it?"

"I—don't—know," Kathleen's eyes were serious. "You have raised a new problem, Richenda mine. It is funny," she went on, "it is funny to be in love with a dream man, but it's better than not being in love at all, isn't it, Jean?"

Jean nodded. Jean's heart lay out in a lonely grave on the side of a Flanders hill. Jean knew . . . . things.



"I WONDER, O MAN OF MY DREAMS, IF YOU ARE HERE ON THE SAME EARTH WITH ME."

The three girls talked on for a while till presently Kathleen rose with a yawn.

"Heigho!" she sighed. "I'm off to bed. Come on, Jean, leave Richenda to her beauty sleep—not that she needs it much, the lovely young pagan. Still——"

They clattered from the room, still laughing, these fine young women who were Richenda's friends.

"It's odd," said Kathleen reflectively as they went up to their respective rooms a floor higher. "Fancy us believing in this sort of 'tosh' Dick talks about. And yet there is something queer about her, isn't there, Jean?" She turned for confirmation to the other girl. "She's so dark—so tense—so different."

"Yes," agreed Jean, "Richenda is—different. And, Kathie, she firmly believes in this vision she has told us about. Now, you minx, Dick is pretty sensitive. For pity's sake don't tease her into reticence."

"I won't," said Kathleen soberly. "I vow I won't."

Meanwhile Richenda Peterson was gazing over the ugly chimney-pots of the packed gray houses toward a big dazzling moon that hung in the velvet sapphire sky.

"I wonder," she said reflectively, "I wonder, O man of my dreams, if you are here on the same earth with me—or out away—beyond the moon in some place I have yet to find. I wonder——

"At any rate," her mouth kinked mischievously at the corners, "if you do exist on this worn-out world of ours, somewhere—somehow—I'll track you down—I swear it."

. . . . . .

The money was longer in coming than she had anticipated, but time flew on scurrying feet for Richenda. She must work out her month at the office, she decided loyally—she couldn't leave them in the lurch. Then there were so many things to do—people to whom she must write—her clothes to be looked over—new things bought—wonderfully silky, sheeny things—coats with soft linings. Not too many, for Richenda wisely decided to "travel light." Jean and Kathie could have all the furniture and trappings of her little bed-sitting room.

"No, we won't accept it for [illegible]," said Jean firmly. "You'll

want it yourself when you come back —broke!"

Try as she might, Jean of the Scotch caution could not forgive Richenda for this mad scheme of prodigal spending. Now she, Jean—oh, with five thousand pounds she would have bought a business in Oxford street and gone on—trimming hats!

But sunny-headed Kathleen had entered thoroughly into Richenda's plans.

"Dick won't come back broke," she cried cheerfully; "she'll come back with some American millionaire trotting adoringly behind her charming heels, and then she'll do the Lady Bountiful to us in splendid style—and I, for one, shall let her!"

"But," demurred Jean again, "the wild infant doesn't even know where she is going yet. Yesterday it was Egypt, the day before Rio de Janeiro; today it's been India and the West Coast of Africa. Anyway, what on earth people will think of a young girl flying round the world in this

mad-hatter way passes my comprehension!" she ended lugubriously.

"Oh," giggled Kathleen, "they'll put it down to the old feminine vice—husband-hunting." She turned a mischievous eye on Richenda.

But Richenda answered unashamed: "Well, and if the right man comes over my horizon, I'll hunt him sure enough—same as you would yourself, Miss Adams!"

"Or same as any other sensible woman would," chirruped Kathleen. "Bravo, Dickie! You have got a grain of sense left after all!"

"But mind, I said the right man."

"I don't believe you'll recognize him if you do meet him," grumbled Jean mournfully. "You'll be looking for a some one who doesn't exist—that man you have nightmares about. You're hopelessly impractical, Richenda. Preserve me from these people with black eyes and Spanish great-grandmothers!"

"Now don't drag her ancestors into her escapades. Let them R. I. P., for pity's sake," implored Kathleen.

"It's true enough, though," answered Jean. "Wild blood will out."

"Well," laughed Kathie, "at any rate, Dick, it's about time you made up your mind to which quarter of the globe those adventurous feet of yours are first to be directed."

"Oh, dear," sighed Richenda, puffing a little blue cloud of cigarette smoke from between troubled lips, "it's frightfully difficult! I never guessed money could bring such problems in its train."

"I?" said Kathleen, "I would go to New York. I'd see the skyscrapers and Fifth avenue and the freak dinners and——"

"I?" said Jean, "I would go to Nice. It's moderately respectable, and you'd get the palms you're howling about there."

"Perhaps South Africa,"—Kathleen again—"they say that Durban is another Brighton. There is surf bathing, too, and——"

"Where are those guide books?" Richenda broke in; then, a little later, "Oh, why do the guide books never tell one of the things one wants to know? Who cares for the chief imports of South Australia?"

She cast a cloud of fluttering pamphlets from her knees in disgust. "D'you know, girls, I've a good mind to do the pin business again—Ena, deena, dinah, doh, catch a . . . It stood by me last time. Why shouldn't it stand by me again?"

She jumped laughing to her feet, danced over to her work basket, which lay on a nearby table, half covered by an evening newspaper that Kathleen had brought in on her way home from business.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT V.

The Dream Face.

SUDDENLY Richenda's pink cheeks whitened, a little startled look came into her wide, dark eyes, a little gasp of fear came through her parted lips.

"Girls," she said slowly, a note of strange amazement in her voice, "girls, it's he—the—the—man who comes in my dreams. Jean—Kathie—what does it mean? Oh, look."

They fell upon her, tore the paper from her shaking fingers, voices raised in questioning exclamation.

Richenda couldn't speak now. She was trembling violently, white to the lips. She could only point weakly at the pictured face which gazed out from the printed page.

A lean, hatchet face it was, clean shaven, with finely cut features, a wide, firm mouth above a thin jaw line, a pair of keen, humorous eyes, looking out from under heavy brows.

A strange, unusual face, that few could pass by with a cursory glance. A strong face—indomitable will showed in every line of it. A whimsical sadness lurked in the compelling eyes. Good intellect spoke from the broad, high brow. Courage showed in the chin. Not a handsome face, but one which by its fascinating force could make those who saw it look—and look again.

And so Jean and Kathleen looked again.

"What do you mean, Richenda?" they demanded.

Richenda was more composed now, her breath came a shade more quietly.

"That is the face which comes in my dreams," she said. "Now you know why I couldn't marry John Charteris."

"It is incredible," cried Jean, "impossible! You've never seen the man! Dick, you are mad—dreaming!"

"No," said Richenda, a rather wonderful soft light shining in her eyes, "I'm awake—now."

Kathleen was reading the typescript aloud, punctuating her words with staccato shrieks of excitement.

SHE COULD SEE THE SMOKE PALLS OF LONDON MILES AWAY.

"Oh, Oh!" she cried, "he's Brett Fairways, the famous explorer. I've read about him before. He did that wonderful Central Australian journey—you know—they got captured by the aborigines and nearly eaten alive. Look," she pointed a pink nail at the heading above the photograph: "Brett Fairways Starts for Africa Today."

Jean chimed in. "A six-month tour in East Africa. The famous explorer goes on holiday. Oh, Richenda, how perfectly wonderful."

"Are you sure—quite sure—it's the same man?" persisted Kathleen.

"Quite sure." Richenda's tone was steady now. "I know that face too well to make any mistake."

Kathleen's eyes glowed fire. "Dickie, do you think he is the right man?" she breathed.

"That's just what I've got to go and find out," answered Miss Peterson calmly.

"Oh, Dickie! You'd never . . . You surely don't mean to go to——"

"I shan't need that pin, girls," she said then. "The question has answered itself. I'm—going—to——"

She paused suddenly. A united yell broke from the other two pairs of lips.

"Oh, Dick, go on . . . go on . . . you're going to——"

"To East Africa," ended Richenda.

The silence of utter amazement closed upon her words. Then:

"Oh, Dick, you can't do a dreadful thing like that!" Even Kathleen was scandalized.

"It's tantamount to chasing a man round the world," put in Jean. "Suppose he ever found out!"

Richenda knitted her black brows fiercely. "I shall not chase him," she told them. "You simply don't understand! Girls, girls, can't you see? It's like so many points won in a game of chance. First his face comes in my dreams, and then, on the heels of that, all this money showers down upon me, spelling adventure, escape. But escape—where? I cannot even say! Then the newspaper falls right under my hand. His face again—Africa! What unanswered question is it hurling across to me? I cannot tell. But, Kathie, Jean, it's something—something meant for me alone. Chance knocks at the door of every one's life at least once. Should one turn a deaf ear to its calling? Should I go off a tangent to some opposite side of the world just from a sense of mid-Victorian convention?

"I won't do it!" She clenched her brown hand fiercely. "I'll go the way that these strange happenings direct. I'll see what is at the end of them . . . Girls, there's more in heaven and earth than our tiny comprehensions can ever realize! I may

never even see Brett Fairways, but yet I know that in some strange manner he is going to influence my life. I'll make my way into that sphere of influence. That's all I'll do. I'll go to Africa—East Africa—and I know as well as I've ever known anything that the minute I set foot there Fate will take the shaping of my life into her own hands. I'll rest content to let her lead me where she will!"

"Union Castle Line—Tilbury to South Africa—East Coast Route—Kenya . Colony—Port Mombasa—Fares . . . ." Kathleen was ruffling the leaves of a yellow guide-book.

. . . . . .

Tilbury!

Richenda Peterson leaned her slim elbows over the taffrail of the S. S. Tibetan and watched the drab gray buildings of the murky town on its colorless river slip back westward.

How the days before had scurried by! The endless buying, sorting, packing.

She hadn't taken more than she could help, true enough. In her cabin below there was but one portly trunk and a big suit case. But stowed away in that trunk, was one part of a bank's world letter of credit, and the duplicate part of this was sewn

in a little secret money belt which Richenda in great discretion wore hidden from sight round her waist. That letter of credit is going to do great things for Richenda Peterson, she reflected, and smiled mischievously.

How drab the river looked, how dirty and unwashed the grimy tugboats!

She could see the smoke pall of London miles away. London, with its hurry and bustle, with its soul-racking labor, its disappointment, its cruelties.

London—a good place to leave behind when one is going to the warm lands—the strange, new, colorful lands which spell adventure!

London! Would she ever have to come back to it? If so, how would she come back? "Broke" and disappointed, as Jean had grimly surmised, or with something of the triumph Kathleen had predicted?

Well, only time to come would tell her that. She cupped her chin in her hands with a sigh.

For a moment she felt a little scared. Somehow this wild adventure had its terrifying side. Oh, it was

glorious, sure enough! It brought her just that spice of "differentness" for which she had often longed in the drab monotony of the years behind her, yet, too, it brought her a sense of her own smallness, a sense of loneliness, even a brooding sense of coming danger.

She shivered suddenly, drew the woolly gray traveling coat a shade more tightly round her, turned from her vantage above the quickly flowing river to the trimness of the newly painted decks, then paced toward the bow, her chin tilted to a more decisive angle.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT VI.

An Unpleasant Encounter.

THE next few days were full of amusement to Richenda Peterson. The varied types she found among her fellow passengers interested her tremendously. One by one she watched people pair off in couples or form little cliques. The pretty widow who shared her cabin had taken a comprehensive census of the masculine possibilities within a couple of hours of boarding the boat, and the same evening over the hair-brushing orgy had revealed her feelings to Richenda in an angry outburst.

"Duds, my dear, that's what the men on this boat are! Absolute duds!

"AH, NO," HE SAID, "NICE LADIES DO NOT WALK ALONE IN GIBRALTAR."

There isn't one of them worth wasting time on!"

Nevertheless, she managed to waste a good deal of this particular commodity upon them. One by one they drifted into little Mrs. Johnley's circle, fetched her rugs and cushions, bought her morning lime squashes, evening cocktails, listened to the naughty quips which fell from her pretty, tinted lips. For a while Richenda, too, was in the laughing circle, but she felt oddly ill at ease among them, and gradually she dropped into the habit of spending hour after hour curled up in the deck chair she had drawn to an isolated corner, poring over her well loved books of poetry.

The bevy of missionary ladies aboard did not interest her. The

charming young deck officers who loitered by her chair with idle conversation found her oddly unresponsive. The married men who, having left wives in England, were ready to flirt with any unclaimed young woman aboard the vessel, after a while voted Richenda dull.

She didn't understand why they should wish her to come and sit among the dark seclusion of the boat deck, or pretended she didn't, which came to the same thing in the end.

"I am quite comfortable here, thank you," she would say calmly, snuggling down a little farther into her cushions, and the unattached paterfamilias would drift off elsewhere, lest the opportunities of their unusual freedom might be lost.

But Richenda was happy. She liked to sit apart and watch these people, even dissect them a little bit. Everything was new and delightful to her. She didn't want to mix in the hurly-burly of "board ship" life too soon.

She read her beloved poetry—sat for hours gazing across the changing light of the Atlantic, resting, dreaming.

So the S. S. Tibetan rolled down the English Channel past the twinkling lights of Ushant into the Bay of Biscay, which, in spite of its bad name, behaved remarkably well. The weather grew a little warmer now.

"We are hitching up at 'Gib' early tomorrow morning," Agatha Johnley told Richenda after a few days at sea. "With whom are you going ashore?"

Richenda started. "I—I don't know," she said a little vaguely. "Couldn't you and I——"

Agatha laughed. "'Tisn't done, my child! D'you know, you've been remarkably lax. Every sensible woman 'gathers eyes' before she has been two days aboard. Simply got to get hold of some one to run her round all the ports the boat stops at—to 'stand Sam' in the way of buying local curios, etc. Didn't you know that?"

"I—I never thought about it," answered Richenda.

"Well," the little widow went on composedly, "you've still got this evening! Make yourself nice to old Col. Grimshaw, my dear. He has money enough to buy all 'Gib' for you! I'd"—she sighed regretfully—"I'd have reserved him for myself if I hadn't had my hands full with Jack Andrews. But Jack is just the sort to go off in a huff if you let another man butt in—I daren't risk it at present——"

Richenda knitted her black brows a little angrily. "I suppose I can go round Gibraltar by myself," she said, coldly.

Agatha laughed. "Of course, you can, dear girl, but, don't you see every other woman on board will think you can't get a cavalier, or at least that's what they'll say!"

"Why should I trouble what they say?"

"And, anyway, if you do go about alone you'll find it frightfully expensive——" which remark decided Richenda Peterson that, whatever happened, she would explore Gibraltar by herself.

Much to her surprise the next morning, she had two offers of mascu-

line escort, both of which she smilingly but most decidedly turned down. She'd show the little widow that she, Richenda Peterson, could stick to her own independence!

The huddled crowd of quaint shops under the shadow of the great rock interested her vastly as she wandered from one to another, purchasing here a curio, there a piece of beautifully worked lace, farther on a basket of green and purple figs.

The drifting medley of cosmopolitan human beings added color and movement to the scene. By the edge of the cobbled pavement an Indian lascar argued with a black-eyed Portuguese. Across an umbrella-shaded stall a bespectacled Japanese student bargained with a red-fezzed Arab. Farther on the air was heavy with the clamor of a market place.

At length Richenda's steps led her out of the town along the white road leading up to the fortifications.

The way was lonelier here. Occasionally a peasant cart drawn by sturdy Spanish oxen passed her, the bronze-skinned driver showing flashing teeth in an amicable smile as he trundled by. Farther on luck favored her with a glimpse of Gibraltar's famous baboons. She stood watching the great creatures as they bounded from rock to rock on the grass-draped slope above; laughed as one mother, jockeying a chubby infant on its back, stopped to direct a volume of grimacing chatter at her.

"The mees is 'appy?" Richenda started as the words came softly across her shoulder, and swirled round to find herself gazing into the depths of a pair of bold dark eyes. There was something in those eyes which held her dumb a moment—something evilly fascinating, a little sinister. She stepped back, dumbly gazing at the man who addressed her.

Sensuous, smiling, crimson lips were set in a lean, dark face. And the man's broad-brimmed felt hat was pushed back to reveal an oily lock of long black hair straying across his narrow forehead.

Her face whitened suddenly. No other human being was in sight down the long white road. She gave a little frightened gasp.

"The mees will walk wit' me?"

She found her voice then. "Go away," she cried. "Go away at once!"

He laughed softly, a little menace creeping into his narrowed eyes.

"Ah, no," he said. "Nice ladies do not walk alone in Gibraltar. It cannot be permitted. I"—the wide-brimmed hat came off with a sweep—"I will make escort for the English lady."

"I am going back to my boat," she said, making a movement to retrace her steps.

"Ah—no——" The voice was a little harsh between the cruel white teeth. "I think the mees will favor her adorer with something more of her company than that. Come now, does not the old song tell us—'just a leetle love—a leetle kiss'—

Suddenly the felt hat was bashed by a strong, slim hand over his eyes down to his singing lips, and Richenda was running down the long white road as if all the demons of the nethermost regions were hard upon her heels.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT VII.

The Rescue.

THE man's yell of fury rent the air, serving to urge Richenda to a greater effort. Then closer, closer behind her she heard the long loping footsteps—closer . . .

Her breath was coming in short, hard gasps now, her eyes half blinded with the pain of terrific endeavor, her brain torn with the sense of terrible fear. But still her feet covered the ground a bare half dozen yards in front of this menacing danger which threatened hard upon her heels.

The road could not be very much longer! Soon—soon some one must come in sight . . . She couldn't see the ground before her now, a gray mist swam across her eyes, but still she ran on—on——.

Then suddenly she felt his hand on her arm. She swirled blindly down and fixed her strong little teeth upon it. She would fight as long as the breath was left in her tortured body!

"What in the name of heaven is

SHE LIFTED HIS HAND AND GENTLY WRAPPED HER HANDKERCHIEF ROUND THE TORN SKIN.

the matter with the girl? Stop it at once, d'you hear? Powers above, are you trying to eat me?"

Another hand forced her head up—back. She sagged suddenly, things swirled madly round her for a moment, then the road rose up and smote her on the shoulder and for the first time in her healthy young life Richenda fainted.

Half a minute later her eyelids flickered again.

"Ah, that's better," came the voice. "Now, young woman, will you kindly tell an unoffending stranger just why you suddenly fall upon him in the road and drag the flesh piecemeal from his innocent bones? You know there are more approved ways of introduction!"

The level calmness of the soft Scottish voice brought Richenda's senses back with a sudden rush. She looked up vaguely. This time a pair of twinkling blue-gray eyes met hers, eyes which held nothing menacing in their depths, but only a rueful question.

"Little lady," he said, gently, "tell me what frightened you."

"Oh," she shuddered, "that horrible man! Didn't you see him?"

"I saw nothing," he smiled, "except a slim white whirlwind that suddenly swirled round the corner of the road and would have blindly passed me had I not instinctively scented that something was wrong and put out a hand to stop it—for which thoughtful act my fingers are nearly torn in ribbons!"

Richenda gave a sudden gasp. "I beg your pardon," she said, "I—I thought you were that beastly creature again! He—he was running after me!"

"Well," he replied, "the brute must have caught sight of me and moved off. Even a wandering Scotsman has his uses. A nasty adventure for you, though, but why, in the name of all that's wonderful, did you go walking about Gib alone like that? Didn't you know any better?"

"No-o!" said Richenda, weakly.

"Then it's time somebody taught you," came the terse reply. "And since there is now a distinct blood-tie between us"—he looked down at his fingers—"I think I should be the appointed tutor-in-chief. Let me take you back to the boat, Miss Peterson."

He put a hand under her elbow as she rose shakily to her feet.

"So you know my name?" she smiled.

"Of course I do," he answered. "You share a cabin with the charming widow and you sit next to the screw-necked missionary man in the dining saloon, and you read Laurence Hope's beautiful, naughty Indian poetry and then you shut the book and look out across the sea and wonder if Africa is

going to be all color and love like that——"

"I don't!" She reddened suddenly.

"At any rate, it isn't," he went on calmly.

"You seem to have watched me pretty closely."

"What else is there to do in the close confines of an ocean-going steamer if one doesn't observe some of the all sorts and conditions that go to make a world?"

"I've seen you on deck."

"I'm flattered." He gave her a laughing bow. "I wasn't aware you even knew I existed. You always seemed to look right through me and out the other side. I wonder if, after all, you only chewed me to see if I were real."

"Comrade," Richenda chided, "don't rub it in. I've asked your pardon." She lifted his hand and gently wrapped her handkerchief around the torn skin. "And now," she said, "I think we'd better get back to the boat."

"I see you've given up 'the-cat-that-walks-by-herself' idea," said Agatha Johnley to Richenda two days later. "Wise young woman!"

Angus Brodie, true to his word, constituted himself tutor-in-chief to Richenda from the day of their curious meeting in Gibraltar, and the girl, a little tired of solitude, was glad to accept the proffered friendship. She felt that the reserved Scotsman held some odd attraction for her. True, there was nothing particularly strik-

ing about his personal appearance. He had the square, stocky figure and the sandy-red, rather sparse hair of the average Glasgowite. His clean-shaven mouth was very firm, but his shrewd, gray eyes twinkled with quiet humor that responded to every laughing sally Richenda delivered, and his low, attractive voice capped her words with others that were sure to bring forth fresh laughter. Nothing particularly handsome or arresting about him, but just a quiet, straight-living young Scotsman who would make a good friend to any one whom he accepted into the circle of his friendship—that was Angus Brodie. He was the only man on board who had not drifted into the vicinity of Agatha Johnley's noisy company.

As the S. S. Tibetan glided across the wonderful sapphire of the Mediterranean Angus Brodie's chair was always seen by Richenda's own.

Together they explored Port Said, rambling through the Indian curio shops, where gilt and enamel antiques were pushed in front of their eyes by garrulous salesmen.

"Genuine—verrie rare—only one pound! Your pretty wife would like it!" more than one old gold-capped shopman assured Brodie.

"Birmingham—sold at ten shillings a gross!" he answered grimly. "No, Brother Ali, this is not my first journey through the canal!"

They moved on to where a skinny, calico-clad vender of glass beads informed them that all the powers of Hades could not compel him to cheat them. "Am I not Joc-ckk MacPhee-r-rss-n from Ab-beer-r-deen?" His bronze body danced impudently in their path.

Brodie shot out a brogued shoe toward his persistent "countryman" and "Mr. MacPherson" retired to a more respectful distance.

Presently they sampled the tiny cups of thick, sweet Arabian coffee and Richenda bought a supply of white-clouded Turkish delight.

"If you knew how they made that stuff, Miss Peterson," Brodie began. Then, "Ah, well, where ignorance is bliss——"

"Tell me at once," Richenda commanded.

A moment later the round wooden box was floating slowly down the canal.

"It's just like so many other lovely things in life," she sighed. "Horrible and revolting if you penetrate behind the scenes!"

"Oh, little pessimist!" he laughed. "How comes it that at your tender age you have discovered world-old truths like that?"

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT VIII.

A Dream Come True.

THE ship left Port Said next morning and steamed on her 12-hour journey down the Suez Canal, then into the heat of the Red Sea. As the days went on Angus Brodie kept closer than ever to Richenda's side. He was going back to his little coffee farm in Kenya, he told her, after having spent six months' holiday in England.

Richenda sat raptly listening as he described his life in the Kenian Highlands.

"It is living with a capital 'L'," he smiled. "Wonderful, elemental, perhaps even a little rough, but nobody who has learned to love such a life could ever go back to the London streets again." He went on: "To lie in one's bed at night and hear lions grunting far across the plain, to delve deep into the forest on the track of a marauding elephant, to dodge death by inches a yard from the horns of a charging buffalo——"

"You have done all that?"

"All of it—and I'll do it again scores of times before I've finished. But that's not all," he went on, his gray eyes firing suddenly. "It's the wonderful wide space about one—the great miles of silence—the big, quiet,

barren mountains springing up from the rolling plains. They make one think. They tell one things——" He broke off suddenly, leaving the sentence unfinished.

"Don't you ever find it lonely?" she asked.

Angus Brodie looked full into her eyes then.

"Never," he said slowly; "never before. But now—perhaps I may."

Something in his tone gave her a sudden warning. She fingered her book a little nervously, sought for a

remark which might turn the conversation into other channels, opened her lips.

But the Scotsman was not to be turned from his purpose.

"Richenda," he said quietly, "I'm thinking that when I get back to my little homestead this time I shall find it lonely—darned lonely—unless you'll consent to come and share life with me."

"No—no!" said Richenda. "You mustn't say that! I—I'm sorry, but I—couldn't."

She was sorry—more sorry than the halting, awkward words could express. She hated to see that look of pain come into the kind, gray eyes.

Oh, if only men wouldn't fall in love like this! Things would be so much easier.

"Can't we be just friends?" she faltered.

"Of course we can, if there is no possibility of anything else." He laid his firm hand gently on her own. "Don't worry about it, little girl. Maybe I was a bit too previous. Let it be good friendship now—perhaps later on——" He paused for a moment, went on disconnectedly. "Anyway, you'll want friends in east Africa, and—you won't find many there worth having. It's an 'out for oneself and the devil take the hindmost' sort

of country with a vengeance!"

A sudden wave of cold foreboding ran through her.

"At any rate, I'll have one friend," she said, and took his fingers into her soft, pink palm.

Next day they reached Mombasa.

"Oh, what a fairy island!" cried Richenda as the low, white, coral cliffs, draped with a riot of emerald vegetation, came into view. They steamed slowly down the narrow channel toward the harbor of Killindini, and at length dropped anchor in midstream.

All was bustle and confusion now. The S. S. Tibetan was surrounded by a score of small boats, each bearing a meager crew of yelling native rowers. From these vessels white men clambered up to the deck and mixed busily among the voyagers.

An hour later Richenda set foot in east Africa—that strange, new country to which the face of an unknown man smiling out from the page of a newspaper had drawn her.

"Would you rather have a taxi or a

rickshaw?" Brodie asked as they left the customhouse.

"A rickshaw—every time!" she answered eagerly.

He chose a vehicle from the odd half-dozen which immediately surrounded them, gave an order to the khaki-clad native, who placed himself horse-wise in the front shafts, and they trundled off down the white coral road.

"What on earth is the matter with the boy behind?" asked Richenda presently as she cast a glance back to where the hindmost native assisted

WAS THIS BRETT FAIRWAYS?

the rickshaw along the road. "He is trumpeting like an astmhatic elephant."

"That's nothing to what he will do when we halt," laughed Brodie. "Dear lady, it's a delicate sort of hint that he finds us heavy above the average and expects good baksheesh as well as his legal payment. For pity's sake take no notice of him."

The perspiring native at length dropped the shafts of the vehicle at the door of a small hotel. A very charming building this, composed of square blocks of white coral and set among close-cut emerald lawns,

through which meandered vine-hung trellised paths.

"Go inside," said Brodie as they dismounted. "It's too hot for you to stand about out here."

She obeyed gratefully and walked into the cool gloom of the hotel.

From outside came the shrill voice of the asthmatic rickshaw boy, volubly demanding extra baksheesh from Brodie, who was finding some difficulty in deciding what should be a reasonable fare.

Richenda stood idly scanning the letters fixed behind the criss-cross

tapes of a green notice board as she waited.

Suddenly she gave a little gasp, for, fixed through the tape in an upper corner of the board, sat a fat white envelope, and scrawled in bold hand-writing across it she read:

"Brett Fairways, Esq., Room 44, Castle Hotel, Mombasa."

So destiny hadn't waited long! Within the first hour of her landing in east Africa she had been led to make her abiding place under the very roof that sheltered the man whose face had haunted her dreams in far-off Hampstead.

And Fate was moving on rapid feet

again now, for as Richenda stood there a tall, lean man walked through a nearby door, strode across to the letter board, took down that very letter, on which her eyes still dwelt, and ripped open the envelope.

Richenda had seen those thin, tanned fingers reach out and take the letter from the rack, had heard the tearing rip of papers as he opened it, but not one glance had she dared to steal at the face of the man who stood reading his missive barely a yard behind her, for suddenly Jean Anderson's words had come hurtling back to her:

"Chasing a man across the world! Oh, Dick, how can you think of it!"

She stood for a moment very still, her cheeks blazing fire hot with sudden shame. Then she twisted slowly on her heel until her eyes were turned toward his face, and suddenly a great amazement held her motionless.

Was this Brett Fairways?

Feature by feature she analyzed the lean, brown face. His eyes she could not see, but the finely shaped mouth was there, yet something of its firmness seemed lacking. A shade of looseness hung about its corners—the jaw line, too, was a little puffy. It was the face that she had seen in her dreams, yet somehow different, slacker, more "earthy." And hair and eyebrows were a flaming red!

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT IX.

Disappointment.

RICHENDA felt a sense of shock. Somehow she had always thought of Brett Fairways as dark. One rarely carried away a sense of color from one's dreams, she knew that. And, of course, red hair might easily come out black in a newspaper photograph. Still . . . it was the face of her dreams and yet—it wasn't!

Somehow it half fascinated her, yet half repelled her. And through her bemused senses ran that depressing sense of disappointment.

He made a movement and she switched her eyes back to the letter board again.

What idiotic things dreams and dream men were anyway, she thought savagely. What idiotic creatures girls who paid attention to them must be!

Yes, Jean Anderson was right. She, Richenda, must have seen this man's pictured face in some paper before

"FRIEND," SHE SAID GENTLY, "I'M OUT FOR ADVENTURE ALONE."

she began to dream about him. That was the rational explanation of it. She whirled round on her heel to meet Brodie coming through the doorway.

Richenda was charmed with the quaint comfort of the Castle Hotel. Built of square blocks of white coral, its thick walls gave quiet cool gloom to its spacious interior. Inside were gleaming tiled floors, covered here and there with Indian rugs, and in odd corners stood large, quaint, round pots of brass and lacquer holding tropical palms and ferns. The white gowned Swahili menservants—termed "boys," irrespective of age—moved quietly to and fro, bearing here a tea tray set with Japanese china, there glasses of lime squash complete with twin straws, further away enticing mixed cocktails for groups of men, who sat with crossed legs in the "long sleever" wicker chairs of the tropics.

It was all very new to her—very fascinating. Even the goggle-eyed lizards that ran up and down the distempered wall of her stone floored bedroom held a charm for her

"If you touch them their tails will drop off," Brodie had told her.

She spent 15 exciting minutes trying to prove the truth of his information.

She approached, oh, so slowly and carefully, the gray-green, splay footed reptiles, which surveyed her with curious fixed stares a yard away from her stealthily moving finger, then suddenly shot that finger out, to dab it hard on the spot where the lizard had been barely half a second before, and paused with a rueful smile as a loud "tck-tck-tck-tck" came from a distant corner where wall met ceiling!

"Why," she cried, "the creature is actually laughing at me!"

She never saw the tail of a lizard apart from its body.

For all its clean comfort, certain things about the hotel were very primitive.

It was funny to have a half-naked black, clad in a yard of dirty calico, bring one's hot water to the bathroom in a couple of old kerosene tins—a bit maddening to see him suddenly plunge a none too attractive arm into the bath to decide if a comfortable temperature had been maintained.

"Woo-woo!" shrieked Richenda, "Don't do that!"

But the henchman, misunderstanding her, merely lifted a nude leg and wriggled five toes down into the water.

"Not—'ot," he remarked composedly, "not 'ot."

That afternoon Angus Brodie chartered a dilapidated motor car, intent on showing her the island. They trundled slowly along the winding white coral roads shaded by portly twisted banyan trees. At intervals they passed quaint bungalows hung with a tangle of rioting flowers. Further on the three-mile-wide island grew wilder. Long grass, tangled vines, and drooping palms fought against each other for existence, and the blazing red of the flame flower shot its vivid color through the emerald green vegetation.

Here and there sat a mud walled, palm thatched native hut, surrounded by naked brown children, scuttering hens, yapping mongrels and ragged, bleating goats. Beyond, across the narrow strait of placid sapphire water, they could see the low flat stretch of the African mainland, with its

slender, leaning coconut palms standing black against the sunset.

"So this is Africa," said Richenda. "I love it already."

"Tomorrow," answered Brodie, "I have to go up to my own place beyond Nairobi. It's 400 miles away. Richenda, I—I don't like to leave you here. Couldn't you——" he broke off with an unspoken question in his kind eyes.

"Friend," she said gently, "I'm out for adventure alone! I must go through with it. I could never settle down till the lust for it is over—and that won't be for some time yet. But I'm sorry you're going. Any woman would be sorry to part from a man like you—and yet Fate carves out odd ways for us, and at present your way and mine do not lie together—you know that."

He nodded silently.

"But," he said, "East Africa is no place for a young and pretty girl, alone with money, and—idle."

"Why? Are you back on the old

nursery adage, 'Satan finds some mischief still'?" she teased him.

His hand came on her own, then: "Girl, if—if anything should go wrong with you, give me your solemn promise that you will come to me for help and guidance."

Richenda's eyes grew suddenly misty. "Yes," she said, soberly, "I promise."

They dined together in the big hall that night. A few moments after they had taken their seats at the little table set in a secluded alcove two other people entered the place.

Came first a pretty woman, flaxen haired and pink cheeked, a trifle voluptuous in figure, perhaps not too young, but her 30 odd years were not unduly apparent. Richenda eyed her approvingly. She liked the little dimples that stole about the wide, laughing mouth. She did not notice a queer, cold hardness about the blue eyes—something that was not quite at one with the smiling gayety of those crimson lips.

The woman was carefully corseted beneath the sleek plainness of her skillfully cut black satin dress, her bare arms were soft with expensive powder. From her neck half way down to her knees, strung at odd intervals on a platinum chain, hung bizarre red woolen beads. Others dropped from the hidden lobes of her ears. Richenda eyed her curiously. The woman reminded her vaguely of Agatha Johnley, the pretty widow who had "gathered eyes" aboard the steamship Tibetan and who was now en route for Natal.

She had turned now to cast a vivacious remark to the man behind her. Richenda's eyes followed, and once again she found herself looking into the familiar face of Brett Fairways. She gasped suddenly. How like, and yet how unlike, the face of her dream he was! How unlike, too, the face that had figured, albeit slightly blurred, in the newspaper photograph. She felt again that sudden sense of disappointment.

Yet he looked rather charming in the plain contrast of snow white shirt front and black dinner jacket—curiously distinguished in his tall, lithe leanness.

She heard him speak. A soft, caressing voice—strangely fascinating. Somehow it matched his smile.

The two were passing her now, and suddenly he glanced aside and caught her dark eyes upon him. For one brief moment his own clear blue ones gazed straight into hers.

Richenda felt a queer little thrill run through her, then they were gone to some table behind her. All through the meal she was yearning to turn round to see what they were doing, how they were looking at each other.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT X.

Richenda Meets a Charming Woman.

NEXT day Richenda bade Brodie bon voyage at the little iron-roofed railway station. She watched his train steam out with a strange sense of loneliness. For a moment she felt suddenly frightened. She left the station, walked down the hard, white road, and, rounding a corner, turned toward the sea.

And at that particular moment Lucille Davenant was idly turning over a 10-week-old edition of the Daily Onlooker which reposed among the English papers on the table of the reading room in the Castle Hotel.

"Look, Brett," she said suddenly. "This photograph is exactly like a girl I saw in the hotel this morning. I wonder if—good gracious!——" She broke off on a fresh track, spoke disconnectedly a moment. "Five thou-

sand pounds—intends to travel—sure enough, it is the same girl!"

Richenda Peterson made her way back to the Castle Hotel with a strange riot of different feelings fighting within her. She was certainly sorry that Angus Brodie had gone, yet mixed with her regret came a curious sense of elation, for now was she not quite free to start on the wonderful adventures which lay before her—adventures which surely had already begun with her first wordless meeting with Brett Fairways?

What did it all mean? She puzzled the matter over in her mind, arriving, as before, at no definite understanding

THE OTHER WOMAN'S HANDS WERE UP TO HER GOLDEN HEAD, CLUTCHING THE SOFT CURLS IN FRIGHTENED AGITATION.

or conclusion, deciding, also as before, to let this strange Destiny which had guided her feet to Kenya Colony work out her life along the lines which she was meant to travel.

Meanwhile she would revel in the voluptuous beauty of the tiny island settlement. The place was so vivid, so clean, so mystic. She loved the hard, white coral roads, draped in avenues of grandfatherly, fat-trunked banyan trees and shaded by the lacy foliage of the pale-green, tattered fronds of rustling banana clumps.

She loved to watch the natives as they drifted across her path. Here was a group of chattering, brown-bodied women, some straddling naked suckling infants across their slim hips, some balancing rough gourd water pots on tightly-plaited, oiled heads. Farther on she saw a bevy of excited Mohammedans, their white, ankle-length robes screwed in knots about their hips, taking part in a friendly foot ball match on a patch of bare, parched ground. She marveled at the force with which their bare feet kicked the ball.

She drifted slowly back to the hotel by devious ways. There was still half an hour before she need think of slipping into her slim, black satin dinner dress, so she made her way into the little reading room.

It held but one person. Richenda recognized the sleek, fair head before she saw Lucille Davenant's face. She moved over to the scattered pile of papers which lay on the center table, rustled them idly for a moment, then suddenly became aware of a stifled scream behind her.

"Oo—oo—o!" it said.

She turned quickly. The other woman's hands were up to her golden head, clutching the soft coils in frightened agitation.

She caught Richenda's amazed eyes.

"Oh!" she said again breathlessly. "It was one of those awful flying cockroaches. It buzzed in my hair. Do—do tell me if it has gone!"

Richenda went over to her and

anxiously inspected the fair curls for a second.

"It isn't there now," she smiled.

"What an idiot you will think me," she said, "shrieking like that! But, do you know, I'm just horrified to death of all the beastly creeping, crawling, flying reptiles and insects one meets in Mombasa—and the green lizards with the swivel eyes that sit on the walls and watch every movement one makes. Have you seen them yet?"

"I have," answered Richenda with an amused giggle. "I rather like them."

"Like them! My dear girl!" The blue eyes widened in astonishment. "My dear girl!' She seemed incapable of further speech.

But Richenda went on: "I don't like the mosquitoes, though. They ——"

"Oh, I know them! They wait until one has just gone to sleep, then they bore through the net and sing 'The Marseillaise' around one's nose loud

enough to beat any jazz band that ever was!"

Richenda agreed ruefully. "Look what they have done to me already," she said, displaying an angrily red wrist.

"You poor thing! But you've been scratching the bites. Don't you know that is frightfully dangerous out here?"

"Who could help it?"

The other took Richenda's wrist between her soft white fingers. "You ought to have this place bound up," she said suddenly. "I once had a poisoned mosquito bite and my arm swelled to such an extent that I had to have it in a sling for three weeks. Honestly, it gives me cold shivers to see anything like this! I wish——" she halted with a little confusion—"I wish you'd come over to my room and let me do it for you."

Richenda hesitated. Oh, it's scarcely anything," she began. "I wouldn't dream——"

The other laughed. "You're going to let me see to it," she said with pretty insistence. "Do you know, bandaging people up has been a perfect vice with me since I was a V. A. D. in wartime. And this really needs it, I assure you. Now, just to please me."

The friendly captivating smile completely won Richenda. After all, that bite was rather painful. And—and she wanted to know this woman who was Brett Fairways' friend.

Lucille Davenant's room was like the woman herself—ornamental, even a little flamboyant. The dressing table was a riot of jade green pots and dishes, interspersed with fantastically shaped crystal bottles. Astride the mirror sat an enormous black velvet cat decked with a scarlet bow. On a side table a great bunch of strange wild orchids was thrust into a flat black bowl.

Cushions of every imaginable shape, size and hue reposed on the wicker chairs. Half a dozen books in the startling-hued paper jackets of the modern novel lay in disorder on the silk-counterpaned bed, some score of framed photographs were perched on table and shelves, and a heavy scent of cloying perfume hung on the air.

Lucille dismissed with a nod a native boy who was fumbling among a heap of lingerie over an opened drawer. He went out, carrying intimate attire fashioned on pink ninon over his skinny, black arm.

Richenda's eyes widened a shade.

"Isn't it too quaint," said the other. "Fancy having to let these savages riot among one's precious 'undies'!"

"But why——" began Richenda, and halted suddenly, leaving her sentence unfinished. After all, perhaps it was rather gauche to ask this new acquaintance why she didn't engage a woman attendant.

Lucille sensed the question which trembled on the girl's lips.

"Can't get them here," she laughed. "The decent native doesn't let his women out on hire—he keeps them at home to pound his mealies, milk his goats and rear his babies while he goes out to make an income 'lady's maiding' the English females who drift into the port. You must be very new to the tropics, or else you'd not have looked so surprised."

Richenda admitted this.

Lucille Davenant laughed. "I'm new here, too," she said. "Only arrived last week."

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XI.

Richenda Feels the East's Allure.

RICHENDA wished she would go on. There were other things the girl longed to know about this vivacious perfumed woman. She sat silent as the little bandage with its scent of disinfectant was placed round her tingling wrist. But the other vouchsafed no information—instead she was putting a series of frank questions to the girl, vivaciously, even a little gushingly, interspersed with squeaks of amazement.

"And you are all alone out here! But how thrilling!" Then: "Do you mean to tell me you don't know yet what you are going to do?" And:

RICHENDA TOOK LONGER THAN USUAL OVER HER TOILET THAT NIGHT.

"We don't even know each other's names yet. Mine is Lucille Davenant—Mrs.—a widow, you know."

So she wasn't Brett Fairway's wife! And now the white brow was knitting in perplexity.

"Richenda Peterson! I've heard that name before. Now—where? And it's curious, but your face is very familiar to me. I know I've seen you before—or your photograph. I wonder where it could have been." She paused in a moment's thought.

"I think," said Richenda, "you probably saw both my name and my face in the newspapers." She had been inclined toward the idea that she would tell as little as possible of herself to strangers in Africa. She had not reckoned on people remembering the winner of the blind ballot in this way. But, faced with such a remembrance as this woman showed, Richenda realized that to refrain from speaking would seem odd to Mrs. Davenant when later she remembered the things which now temporarily evaded her.

Lucille's eyes danced. "How perfectly lovely!" she cried. "It's like meeting Cinderella come out of her kitchen! Have you come to Kenya to find a fairy prince?"

The girl reddened. "I don't want a fairy prince," she replied a little brusquely. "I came out—well, I don't quite know why—but, but every one talks so much about East Africa nowadays, and I—thought I might spend my holiday here just as well as in Siberia or Japan!" Not for a bag of sovereigns would she have told this stranger about that pictured face gazing out from the page of an evening newspaper, that calm, stern face and all it had led her to do!

"And the little Scotsman I saw you with last night?" Lucille put the question with disarming frankness.

"He has gone up to his farm," answered Richenda. "I don't know a soul in Mombasa now."

"Why, neither do I—or scarcely a soul. It's a bit comforting to hear of some one else in the same boat. We might do shopping together."

"I'd love to." Richenda felt a thrill of mixed gratitude and excitement.

The boom of a brass gong suddenly reverberated through the hotel.

"Time to dress," cried Mrs. Davenant. "O, by the way, are you sitting at a table alone for dinner tonight?"

Richenda nodded with a smile.

"Why, that will never do," cried the fair woman. "Come and dine at my table. I'll introduce a really charming man to you."

Richenda's feet literally danced across the corridor and down the stairs to her own room. A really charming man! That could only be . . . Powers above, Destiny had her by the nose with a vengeance. East Africa, too, with its mystic allure, its quiet air pulsing with romance, had her in the hollow of its hand.

The East—the East—it changed her from the sedate typist of those past years into a star eyed, crimson lipped, soul thrilled little girl. She had never had romance yet. She wanted it—wanted it by that turquoise sea which swished singing through the mangroves up to the weed draped coral rocks along the shore—wanted it under the tremendous silver moon which shone down through the swaying palms. Something new sang in her blood—romance—the East.

She didn't know what it meant. She didn't know where it was leading her. She didn't want to know. The silver-bathed singing night allure of the East—it got into the soul of her.

Outside the window a cricket set up a chirping love chant. Richenda Peterson trilled a little song in chorus.

And not a hundred yards away Lucille Davenant was smiling, too—a different smile.

"Bowled first time," she whispered. "Five thousand pounds! Five thousand . . . and she hunted for a cockroach, the blessed babe!"

She dabbed a big swansdown puff reflectively into a pot of purplish yellow powder. Yes, this stuff really was effective under electric light.

Richenda took longer than usual over her toilet that night. She brushed her wavy hair to greater glossiness, powdered her burning cheeks till their damask showed more softly through the light film, then pinned a scarlet flower to the left shoulder of the plain, slim, satin dress, to match the bizarre lacquer red earrings which hung low below the bobbed side pieces which, in modern fashion, hid her ears.

One last look she gave into the mirror before she switched off the electric light. "I'll do," she said, "I'll do." Then with a giggle: "Now, Brett Fairways, we'll just see what part fate means you to play in my life. I'm not feeling the least little bit in love with the real you; it does not attract me so much as the dream

you did. Heigho! Perhaps you are going to lead me to a diamond mine or something wonderful. Richenda Peterson, the African millionairess! Woo—oo, how lovely! Or, perhaps——"

Her thoughts ran rioting in schoolgirl fashion along a fairy path of improbabilities. Then she shut the door and went sedately on her way to the reading room where she had arranged to meet Mrs. Davenant, her little head held high and the quaint red earrings bobbing against her slim neck as she walked.

Lucille was already awaiting her in a daring gown of royal blue taffeta. Ears, neck and wrist bore equipments of jade. The result was startling but rather wonderful. Suddenly Richenda, for all the bobbing lacquer pendants and the scarlet flower, felt a little ordinary. She tilted her chin a shade higher. Then a murmur, a smile, a bow. Richenda had met Brett Fairways.

She felt strangely ill at ease—a little gauche. She murmured a word, halted, and laughed rather self-consciously. She was glad when, a moment later, the dinner gong sang through the hall outside and they walked across to the dining room. But before the meal had ended all Richenda's discomfort had vanished. Perhaps the champagne helped.

She didn't know. She only knew that Fairways had a charming smile and a joyous tongue. The combination did much to overcome her disappointment that his likeness to his photograph was not greater. Of course these society photographers always flattered their clients, touched up the weak points, hid the worst in a face, brought out the best. She had expected too much.

Nevertheless, he was the man of the photograph and he was very charming—very gay and debonair. Richenda had never met a man like this before.

But she realized also that he was very attentive to this blue clad, jade hung beauty who made the third apex of the triangle. Richenda wished suddenly that her own hair was of that same shimmering, flaxen. Dark girls were so common nowadays—fair ones so rare.

"And where do you mean to go in East Africa, Miss Peterson?" he was asking.

"I haven't the foggiest notion, yet," laughed Richenda. "It's lovely to feel that one can move on just where and when and how one likes until—until——"

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XII.

A Triangular Friendship.

RICHENDA hesitated and Brett Fairways prompted her with "Until?"

"Oh, until one's little bank balance goes phut and one has to get down to the trivial round again. You see," a little rebelliously, "I'm out on holiday for just so long as the good time will last. I didn't mean to tell people about myself," she went on ingenuously, "but those dreadful newspapers: 'Richenda Peterson in a corner of her own sanctum,' 'Richenda Peterson, hat on,' 'Richenda Peterson, hat off,' 'roguish,' 'wistful,' and half a dozen other expressions and poses—why, how could I hope to escape recognition? So people will have to accept me as I am—the girl who won the £5,000 prize from the Daily Onlooker and has come out to Africa to 'blue' the lot!"

"Here's to her!" cried Mrs. Davenant, raising a glass.

Fairways laughed and followed her example.

The next few days cemented still faster the friendship which had grown so rapidly between the three. To-

"WHAT WAS THERE TO SAY? HE HASN'T BOUGHT EAST AFRICA."

gether they picnicked on the mainland, probing among the rock pools of the tide-bared reef for quaint shells and vivid ocean foliage. When the sun fell low in the sky they bathed in the soft, warm water, splashing and laughing like three mischievous children. Richenda noticed that Mrs. Davenant's complexion did not survive such immersions very well, but within 15 minutes of reattiring herself behind her separate bush the pink flush in the pearl-white setting was back again, radiant and alluring as ever.

But Richenda's own lips and cheeks needed no attention. She came from the water more vivid and glowing than she had entered it, her dark, short curls more rebellious than before. She was glad that she had but little use for pots and tins of cream and powder, just a dab on a sunburned chin or on a nose which might show a slight tendency to peel, and that was all.

They danced at several of the little clubs in Mombasa, too. Richenda liked Brett Fairways' quiet, slow steps, liked to feel his arm holding her tightly but firmly as he guided her among the gyrating crowd; but, best of all, she liked those times when they sat together in a secluded corner and the gay voice would tell her amusing experiences of his wanderings in wild lands.

She was always a little sorry when Lucille Davenant embarked herself and her partner upon their solitude. But Lucille rarely left the two long alone.

At first Richenda had wondered what bond there might be between Brett Fairways and this woman. It seemed odd. There was apparently no prospect of marriage between them. Yet they had come out on the same boat. They were staying at the same hotel, were always together, and were obviously good friends. To each other they were frankly Lucille and Brett.

Of course, she knew that nowadays the use of Christian names means nothing. Why, already Lucille had dubbed Richenda herself Dickie and Fairways had dropped the Peterson and called her Miss Richenda. Yes, Christian names meant nothing, and yet—and yet—well, she had caught more than one strange look journeying between those two pairs of eyes. She had seen Mrs. Davenant's fingers linger a fraction of a moment too long on his arm. She was sure she had—almost.

Once she ventured to put a tentative question to Lucille: "What made you come to East Africa?"

Mrs. Davenant raised an amused eyebrow. "I suppose it must seem a bit weird to you," she said. "I might have explained before. You see, Brett got a bit tired of running about in the lonely, funny places of the world. He decided to take a holiday for a while—settle down a bit, you know—and, of course, everybody talks such a great deal about East Africa nowadays, the big game, the picturesque natives, the climate. Brett thought he'd come out and see if there is any money to be made plucking coffee or roasting cotton or whatever people do here. Then three more of us who hadn't anything particular on just then said we would join him for a month or two. It's better than Deauville and less dangerous than Monte Carlo. So"—she laughed lightly—"we just hitched on to his wagon and came along, too. We had a gay time in Cairo—Shepheard's, pyramids, camels, desert moonlight, and all that, you know."

"Sheiks?" smiled Richenda.

"Ugh!" Lucille's powdered nose wrinkled disgustedly. "The modern female writers have put the fear of the Lord into every sheik in Egypt. Those women stalk the poor creatures absolutely stalk them—go around with horn spectacles and paper-covered notebooks 'getting atmosphere.' No respectable Arab chief dare show his nose outside his tent door nowa-

days or he is popped into a seven-and-sixpenny 'Purple Flames' before he can say 'John Robinson.' We managed to catch sight of one of them, though--I'll vow he hadn't washed his face for seven years; and his wife—well, she was called Pearl of the Moonbeam—the pearl was 70 inches around the waist, possessed five chins and chattered like a hen with the fear of death on its heels!

"We enjoyed Cairo," she went on, "until the idiotic Denton man decided to slip down a pyramid and break his leg in two places, and, of course, that smashed up the quartet. Maisie Denton stayed behind to do the devoted wife act, and they are going back to England when he can travel again."

"It must have been rather upsetting," ventured Richenda.

"It was. A darned nuisance, in fact! There was I, my flat in London

let for a year, homeless—at a loose end. Of course," she giggled mischievously, "If I'd been a truly prim and proper person with the fear of Grundy in my gentle soul, I'd have trotted dutifully back to England with the Dentons. But I didn't. 'Brett, my lad,' says I, 'I'm a widdy, and widdies can go anywhere and do anything. I'm going on to East Africa.'"

"And what did he say?" Richenda could not resist the question.

"Oh—oh! He got cold feet at once. A terrible attack! 'But,' says he, 'you can't,' and 'It wouldn't do,' and 'I never heard of such a thing,' and 'What will people say?' and—Oh, just the usual crowd of things the average male might be expected to say in the circumstances. 'Brett,' says I, 'that cabin is mine till Mombasa—neither you nor all the Grundys in the universe can turn me out of it till I set foot in Mombasa! If you don't want to know me any more, you needn't. Guess there are plenty of other folks in Kenya. I'm going to do the big-game hunting I planned—I'm going to do the moonlight bathing, the star-lit flirtations under the palm trees, and all the hundred and one other things I counted on—to put it brief and saucy, Lucille Davenant goes on,'" she ended in rippling laughter.

"And what did he say then?"

"What was there to say? He hasn't bought East Africa! He settled down sensibly at last. But," she sighed perplexedly, "of course, it makes some things awkward. You know, the four of us had planned a safari into the 'blue,' and now, I suppose, Brett will have to go alone, unless we can get up another party. Why do idiotic folks have bones in their legs—bones that crack—anyway?"

She sprang up and ran over to the jade powder pot. "Ugh!" she said, as

she flicked a purple-yellow cloud about her. "I'm getting tired of Mombasa already. It makes one's nose so shiny. Brett's moving up to Nairobi next week. He's a bit terrified lest I insist on going with him—just 'Grundyitis' again." She paused, the powder puff held in midair. "Why," she cried suddenly, "why couldn't we all go together?"

Richenda caught her breath.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XIII.

A New Adventure.

SEVERAL times lately Richenda had wondered what she would do when these charming people left her. Once she had caught herself wishing she could go on with them—wondering if there were any chance of them asking her to do this—then putting the thought away with an angry imprecation.

And now: "Couldn't you come with us?" Lucille's voice was a little pleading.

"But — but — Mr. Fairways——" Richenda stammered.

"O Brett? Why, he'd love it! Brett's not too fond of strangers"—Richenda hadn't noticed this—he always seemed as charmingly at ease

"IT DRAWS ONE," ANSWERED RICHENDA.

with new acquaintances as with old ones. "Indeed," went on Lucille, "it only means that instead of the quartet that was to be our company, we have a triangle. Even then, Brett can get hold of another man in Nairobi, maybe. O Dickie, Dickie, darling," she grasped Richenda by the waist and wirled her dancing 'round the room. "Dickie, belovedest, tell me you'll come!"

"Mrs. Davenant——"

"Lucille!"

"Very well, then—Lucille," Richenda found this dancing eyed creature very difficult to resist. "If you really want me, of course I'll come. Providing always," she added soberly, "that Mr. Fairways doesn't mind."

"Brett mind? Why, he adores you! Says you are the most charmingly unsophisticated thing that ever was."

Unsophisticated! Dick felt a shade of annoyance. She, Richenda Peterson, 26 years old—unsophisticated! So that was what he thought about her, and unsophisticated was only a polite word for unpolished—a little gauche! She clicked her white teeth together angrily. She'd teach Mr. Fairways to think like that about her!

"Brett is positively charmed with the idea of your making one of the party," Lucille greeted her at lunch an hour later.

Richenda raised an inquiring eye to Fairways.

"I think it is topping of you, Miss Peterson," he agreed. "This little lady," he indicated Lucille, "absolutely insists on carrying through the original plans we all made in England. And, you know, once Lucille gets her teeth into anything," he shrugged his shoulders, with a humorous crinkle 'round his blue eyes, "once she gets her teeth into anything, she is a regular bulldog for hanging on!"

"Pig!" Mrs. Davenant was pinching his arm now.

"It's true, anyway," he went on. "But she'd have had to forego the shooting trip—even though Kenya is an adept at shutting its eyes to convention! Still, there are limits for a Baptist minister's son——"

"Which you are not, you smooth tongued sinner!" The white fingers pinched again.

"However," he continued unperturbed, "it is all so easy now you are coming with us. But what I want to know is—are you supposed to be chaperoning her or is she chaperoning you?" He finished with teasing laughter.

"Ah," said Lucille. "Wait till we get this pretty thing to the Highlands, Brett! She'll need all the combined chaperoning you and I can give her. Men are six to every solitary petticoat up there, I hear!"

Richenda flushed, then looked up, not knowing quite what to say, and suddenly she met Fairways' eyes. He was gazing at her intently . . . rather too fixedly. There was something in his look that she did not understand—something queerly disturbing—something that thrilled her faintly. It lasted barely a moment, then he was his gay, debonair self again. But Richenda felt that she had seen another Brett Fairways—one that was oddly familiar to her.

The following week Fairways, Lucille and Richenda entrained for Nairobi.

Richenda enjoyed the 20-hour journey to the Kenian Highlands. The little train on the single line railway began its steady climb very shortly after they left Mombasa, leaving behind the picturesque coconut plantations and much of the lowland heat as well.

Darkness fell quickly, and the three sat idly talking as they watched the dim landscape slip past, lit by frequent showers of sparks from the wood-fed engine. At 8 o'clock the train stopped and the passengers disembarked for dinner at a wayside station. The air was chilly here, Richenda shivered suddenly.

Fairways, she noticed, was drawing Lucille's furs more snugly 'round the lightly clad shoulders. Suddenly Richenda felt a little lonely. Yes, she reflected, Mrs. Davenant was just the type of woman upon whom every man would feel impelled to dance attention. How nice to be born like that!

The dinner was a little dispiriting, too, and flying ants dropped half dead from the paraffin lamps into her soup. Richenda was glad when the meal had ended and the three strolled out to pace up and down the primitive platform for a few minutes before the train moved on again.

Fairways said good-night to them at the door of their carriage now, and departed to his own compartment.

"For pity's sake, let's turn in at once," grumbled Lucille. "One can't possibly read by this light."

Richenda awakened betimes next morning. "Oh," she murmured between chattering teeth, "It is positively arctic!"

The country had changed now. Great jagged, barren mountains cut

the skyline. Occasionally an isolated pile stood oddly alone, rising up sheer from a grassy plain. Little farms were dotted about these plains, quaint stunted bushes stood alone and in clumps, and here and there a patch of darker forest.

A wide, wild countryside! Sometimes they trundled along for miles which showed no sign of habitation except for rare groups of half clad savages, who stood staring as the train passed on. Once a troop of baboons lolloped across an open patch not 50 yards away from them. A little later they caught sight of five daintily dappled, long necked creatures, nibbling among a clump of stunted trees.

"Giraffe!" cried Lucille. "What a piece of luck! They are getting very rare even in Kenya."

Then suddenly a huge, silver white, rounded dome, shot with rose rays from the strengthening sun, stood out against the blue of a cloudless sky.

Kilimanjaro! The two women gazed enraptured as the wonderful mysterious mountain of Tanganyika glimmered across to them. Now it was gone, hidden by a clump of nearer peaks. Now it was theirs again—nearer and lovelier than ever in its greater white snow cap. They traced the silver snail course of a shining glacier meandering down its

side to where the dark forest crept up to meet the wandering line.

"Brett says there are rhino, elephant, and all sorts of wonderful things and mysterious people 'round it," said Lucille.

"It draws one," answered Richenda. "Don't you feel it? It's queer—half living——"

"The natives say it is alive," answered Lucille. "In the old days they made sacrifices to Kilimanjaro."

The train continued its long, slow climb. A little later Fairways joined them again at a wayside staiton.

Richenda loved to watch the rabble of native passengers that descended at each halt and sped across to the water taps, intent on filling gourds and bottles of all sorts and sizes.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XIV.

Into the Interior.

BETURBANED Indian fought cheek by jowl with blanket-clad Kikuyu in chattering confusion. Venders of all sorts of odd articles wandered up and down the platform. Here a shaven headed woman decked in an Elizabethan ruff of wire circlets offered three scrawny hens in a flat, rush cage for sale.

"Take, take, memsahib," she implored Lucille. "Shillingee kumi."

"And what," entreated Mrs. Davenant, "what in the name of Abraham is shillingee kumi?"

The bibi displayed 10 stubby black fingers, counting them painfully one by one.

"Moja—bili—tato—eena—tanoo——"

"Now, my good dame, don't play 'this little piggy went to market,'"

RICHENDA SPENT MANY HOURS SITTING IN THE LOUNGE AND WATCHING THIS STRANGE MIXTURE OF HUMANITY PASS BY.

Fairways burst in. "We can do without your poultry, but if you will oblige by piloting the gentleman with the bananas and mangoes along this way. . . ."

The person indicated had caught Fairways' eye and approached at a gallop, unceremoniously jostling the lady of the hens out of his path as he proffered clumps of rather ancient fruit.

Came next a native beggar child exhibiting areas of anatomy covered in loathsome disease.

"Centie! Centie!" he implored.

Richenda tossed him a 50-cent piece. "Here's sixpence," she cried.

"You should not have done that," remonstrated Fairways. "These people are, no doubt, just as awake to the easiest way of earning an income as the beggars in India are. I've seen them in the Punjaub as they exploited their misery in the market place. The missionaries used to implore them to come and be healed. But would they? Not so long as they could get a farthing by begging. That little fellow probably makes a good income out of passing trains."

They watched the child curiously as he went along on his whining way. They saw nearly a dozen coins tinkle to the dust at his rag bound toes.

A fussy Indian station master was shouting the natives back to their seats. He wore a quaint mixture of European and babu clothing, his white draped dhotie flapping incongruously below his belted Norfolk jacket over a pair of bare coffee colored legs.

He saluted the little party as he found their eyes upon him, blew an enormous brass whistle grandiloquently, the loitering natives scattered to their bare planked third class carriages, and the train, with much grinding of axles, creaked forward again.

They were entering the plain land now. Mile upon mile of gently rolling grass lay open to their gaze.

"They said in Mombasa that the

zoological sideshows begin somewhere round here," remarked Fairways. "I believe it is the most thickly stocked game reserve in the world. Instead of counting white horses in the streets for luck as we did as kids, we'll be able to count the lions in a short while. Ten marks for a black maned animal, five for a yellow mane, two for no mane at all," he added laughingly. "Got a bit of pencil, Lucille?"

"Shall we really see lions?" broke in Richenda in high excitement.

"Not if they can help it," he teased her. "But it is all a matter of luck, you know. I met a man in Mombasa who'd been in Kenya five solid years —up in the Highlands, too—and he'd never seen the whisk of a lion's tail. But when his girl came out to marry him she met five walking together before she had been a week in the country.

"Anyway, there's your first ostrich!" He pointed across the veld.

"And a little deer—two—three—why, a whole crowd of them." Mrs. Davenant's voice rose to an excited shriek.

A whole riot of various animals passed before the windows then. Herd after herd of zebra and hartebeeste stood staring as the train went past or lolloped away as the spirit moved them. Ostriches, long necks stuck out in straight line in front of them, sparse brownish feathers all a-flutter, streaked anxiously towards the horizon. Wildebeeste outposts stood none "up wind" on guard on the outskirts of their feeding herds, and scores of buck of all sizes

pranced cheerfully about, flickering white rabbit-like tails behind them. Here and there a long legged secretary bird stalked with mincing gait.

It was a veritable paradise of the wild.

But to Richenda's great disappointment no lion produced himself.

"Never mind," laughed Brett. "Wait till we get really up country and in camp at night. You'll see their big eyes shining closer to you than is comfortable, maybe!"

Richenda was disappointed in the capital of Kenya colony. She disliked the queer medley of wood, iron and stone buildings which lay dotted over a reclaimed area of flat swampy plain, disliked the hard dusty streets flanked by wide open drains. But she found endless interest and amusement in watching pretty fluffy married women who drifted in for the 11 o'clock morning tea which is such an institution in the tropics—always escorted by a bevy of attendant cavaliers, the business men, hot and a little bored, the settlers, red-browned by outdoor life, clad in loose khaki shirts and shorts and dashing wide-brimmed felt hats. These drove up to the hotel from their far-off homes in antediluvian cars of all sizes and makes.

Richenda spent many hours sitting in the lounge and watching this strange mixture of humanity pass by. She had resolved that she would not give Fairways and Mrs. Davenant too much of her company, for that way lay the danger of boredom for them.

Also she had never quite been able to decide just what degree of friendship was between these two. Lucille seemed, with the fascinating imperiousness of a spoiled beauty, to demand a great deal of Fairways' attention. She gave him all sorts of orders which he good humoredly obeyed. He appeared to be fond of the pretty fair haired woman. And she was obviously determined to keep him thoroughly at heel. Richenda began to wonder if there really were no thought of marriage between the two. She admired Mrs. Davenant, liked her, too—Lucille usually began by making the people she intended to use for her own purposes feel genuine affection for her—but yet, there was something in the blue eyes of this woman which repelled Richenda—a curious cold hardness, which weighed one up—which calculated. Those eyes, too, were set a shade too closely together for absolute beauty. Then the mouth—lovely in laughter—perfect in its smile—was in repose a little tight. Once Rich-

enda had seen it drawn into an ugly vicious line which startled her. That was when Fairways had been late in meeting them at a tea shop in the town. Richenda noticed that the moment he appeared Lucille's lips broke into their usually charming smile, but the girl could not forget the memory of that sudden cruel sinister expression. There had been something oddly wolfish about it—something that suddenly made one wonder if the real personality of this woman were hidden by that charming, friendly air which might be only a mask. Richenda was a little horrified when she found herself thinking these things.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XV.

Suspicions.

AFTER all, Lucille had been very good to her. Richenda had no real foundation for such ideas. It wasn't loyal to let her mind run along lines like these. She wouldn't judge Mrs. Davenant's character on such slight evidences. And yet . . . and yet . . . those eyes were too close together.

Now Brett's eyes? They were wide enough apart—frank—a little bold, maybe. His mouth was laughter-loving, though Richenda had seen it fall into serious lines. She liked it best then.

She could never really understand Brett Fairways. There was about him a careless tendency to chose the line of least resistance. Yet there must be greater depths in this man. He had done some rather wonderful things. That dash across central Australia, for instance. It had called for grit, doggedness, force of will. The papers had been enthusiastic. But when she put tentative questions to him, he laughed them away with an idle: "Not half so bad as it sounded. Great fun we had! Of course, the newspapers made a noise—the poor devils have to get exciting copy

somehow, and I've never met an explorer yet who didn't lay it on thick if he got the chance. Tricks of the trade, Miss Richenda! You've got to do it if you want financial support for your next trip!"

But Richenda felt he was not being frank with her.

This man, too, she suspected wore a laughing mask.

And an odd curiosity to get behind that mask seized her. She wanted to know Brett Fairways—the real Brett Fairways, not the gay, debonair fellow who presented himself to Lucille and to her.

She was possessed, too, of an odd conviction that Mrs. Davenant had no idea that this man might possess a dual personality.

Indeed, once in a fit of pique, Lucille had burst forth: "Oh—Brett! Any woman with two good eyes in her head and a decent figure can lead Brett by the nose!"

Then she had suddenly bitten back her anger with an unconvincing: "But that applies to all men, of course, Dickie."

And Richenda knew Mrs. Davenant was sorry she had spoken. But the girl realized, too, that the older woman did not really know Brett Fairways.

Something else, too, had vaguely disturbed Richenda Peterson these days. More than once lately she had caught his eyes upon her with a queer expression in their blue depths. . . . Something infinitely sad . . . . half-yearning. Something that made her feel ill at ease, perturbed . . . . a little thrilled. She couldn't understand it. It wasn't as if she felt angry at surprising his gaze upon her in that way. She didn't. Yet she half suspected that she ought to feel annoyed. It certainly was very strange.

Other things that were strange had happened lately. For instance, that very afternoon, when the English mail had arrived, Lucille had gone pale under her rouge as she had ripped open a big, square envelope. Then she had

turned ashen to the lips, and Richenda had distinctly heard her say under her breath: "The brute! Oh, the brute!" Then she had suddenly left the table with a choked excuse and gone up to her bedroom, and when Richenda knocked at her door a while later Lucille had not asked her to come in, but had merely called out that she was lying down. But Richenda knew that her voice was muffled with crying.

It was an hour later when Richenda saw Brett Fairways go into that room.

She was not at all surprised at this. Brett had been in Lucille's room before; in Richenda's room, as well. More than once she and Lucille had sat with Brett in his own room, too.

"THE BRUTE! OH, THE BRUTE!"

Sometimes they had played cards there. These things meant nothing evil to the wide minds of Africa.

If Lucille were in trouble, surely it was quite natural she would want Fairways' advice.

He came down to the lounge a little later.

"Lucille's had bad news from home," he said simply.

"Oh," began Richenda. "Can I do anything?"

"No. Best leave her alone," he answered shortly.

Mrs. Davenant rose for dinner that night as sparkling as ever. Perhaps her frequent laugh was a trifle hysterical. Certainly her touch with the rouge had been heavier and less deft than usual. She wore her most daring dress—a thing of silver tissue shot with jade lights. Richenda decided it looked out of place in the dusty precincts of the east African hotel.

"My dear," Lucille told her, "that letter cut me up frightfully. My poor darling Auntie Joan—she died of heart failure—suddenly in her sleep. There are papers for me to sign. I don't understand them. Brett will have to talk it over with me tonight to explain things, you know."

Richenda took the hint and excused herself later. "I'm going to bed early," she said. "I love reading in bed."

She parted from Lucille at the latter's door. Lucille had come up to don her squirrel coat.

"Brett must take me out in a car afterward," she said. "I feel so dreadfully blue. That poor darling--the sweetest thing that ever lived."

But somehow to Richenda's ear the words did not ring true. Whatever had been hidden in that big square envelope, she was sure that it was no notice of bereavement.

"My poor, darling Auntie Joan!" How could Lucille possibly read news of a tragic death with her mouth compressed in that odd, cruel grimace?

And would she say, "The brute! Oh, the brute"?

"Well," Richenda decided with a shrug, "it's not my business, anyway. If Lucille wanted to give false explanations——"

Anyway, she needn't have explained at all. That would have been better than telling unnecessary lies. Richenda Peterson had a healthy scorn for lies.

Perhaps this made her a shade more brusque next morning than she otherwise would have been when Mrs. Davenant approached her on a strange, new topic.

Richenda did not at first realize in which direction the various hints and innuendoes were progressing until suddenly the full truth burst upon her. The woman wanted to borrow money. The discovery shocked Richenda. In all her life she had never dreamed of borrowing from any one. Neither had she ever been asked to lend. The idea nauseated her. And surely Lucille Davenant, owner of mink coats, jade tissue gowns and pearls that at any rate looked real, could not be in want of money! Why,

had she not admitted that that big emerald ring she wore was valued at £400?

And now she was trying to dip into a little London typist's tiny windfall! Goodness knows that was already disappearing fast enough without other people's fingers to help it along! Richenda felt a rising anger. She had paid her own way all the time since she had been with these people. Indeed, there had been moments when she shrewdly suspected she had paid a good deal of Mrs. Davenant's way as well. Lucille had an odd habit of leaving her purse behind her in the hotel, which usually meant that, if Fairways were not with them, Richenda had to settle for a dozen little purchases, rickshaw fares, morning teas (Lucille usually had a cocktail, too) and cigarettes. These amounts were small, it is true, but even small sums mounted up in time.

(Continued tomorrow)

INSTALLMENT XVI.

A Strain on Friendship.

RICHENDA PETERSON, though naturally generous, had Scottish blood in her veins, and once or twice that blood had hinted to her that Mrs. Davenant was imposing upon her. Of course, Lucille was delightfully careless.

"Oh, Dickie, darling," she would say, "I must square up with you!" But somehow she rarely did square up, and even then she forgot quite 60 per cent of her indebtedness, and the sums were so various and so small that Richenda could never quite bring herself to mention them.

Nevertheless, there had been that little matter of the 5-guinea jumper nearly a fortnight ago. Lucille had worn that jumper several times. She seemed to have forgotten the fact that she had not repaid Richenda the price of it. And there was the scarlet sunshade as well, and there would have been an ivory necklace, too, but, unfortunately, Richenda had begun to develop east African memory and leave her purse behind as well.

She couldn't bring herself to ask for repayment of these odd sums. It was weak, of course, but she hated the awkwardness of the whole position. It was much easier to be forgetful as

well.

And, of course, Lucille was always talking about paying up, but somehow she never quite got there. And Richenda, who, in most unbusinesslike manner, did not keep account of what she spent, had begun to be decidedly hazy as to exactly how much Mrs. Davenant really did owe her.

Occasionally she pulled herself up with a jerk. Her money seemed to be going very fast. Five thousand pounds had appeared a tremendous amount back in England, but out here—— Richenda's thoughts became disturbed. No, she didn't think Lucille quite played the game.

She looked at the little rouged face before her now.

"You see, dear, it's awfully awkward," soft tones assured her. "Most of my income came from Auntie Joan, and now I shan't get a cent until the estate is cleared up and settled. Then, of course, I'll get a tremendous lot. But these solicitor men never will hurry. It'll take quite three months."

"Eight," said Richenda, who knew something about these things.

"Oh!" Mrs. Davenant gave a cry of dismay. "Surely not so long as that!"

"At the very least."

"But what on earth shall I do? It's frightfully awkward. Of course, Brett would help. But you know, Dickie, one does feel rather dreadful if one borrows from a man. Besides, I'm not at all sure the poor darling has much to lend. Now, if——" She paused and the silence held a definite question.

Richenda made no movement.

"And there's a beastly bill to meet, too—rather a big one. . ."

Richenda knitted her black brows.

"I'll lend you £25, Mrs. Davenant," she began, and instantly wished she had used the Christian name. To suddenly address Lucille by her married title was perhaps a little gauche.

But the other was openly laughing now.

"Twenty-five pounds! Dickie, dear, it won't keep me for three days. You know that well enough. Darling——" Richenda noted that above the hon-

eyed words her eyes were narrow—
"darling this bill alone is for £1,500."

Richenda started.

"Lucille," she said then, "just how much are you asking me to lend you?"

Mrs. Davenant hesitated a moment,

"DICK, I'M A HYSTERICAL BEAST."

launched her thunderbolt with studied coolness:

"Two thousand pounds," she said.

Richenda herself laughed then.

"I think," she said, "you must know quite well how utterly absurd such a proposition is. I'm sorry enough, Lucille, that you put me in the abominable position of having to say 'no' to you. Nevertheless. . . ."

The next quarter of an hour was a very unhappy one indeed for Richenda. Lucille had fumed a little,

pleaded. She seemed to trade a great deal on the close but short friendship that was between them.

But Richenda quietly held her own ground.

"There is your mink coat," she said, "and your pearls as well, the emerald ring, the gold-mounted dressing case. Why, you'd get at least £100 on that new squirrel cloak! And, you know, Lucille, if your aunt's will is all in your favor the solicitors will surely give you some sort of advance on it. Besides, weren't you telling me only the other day that you had stored a new car in England to await your return home? Cable the people to sell

it for you. Perhaps Mr. Fairways and I can settle your hotel bill together for a week or so."

That was the precise moment when Lucille Davenant most undiplomatically lost her temper and said unpardonable things. She was sorry enough five minutes later. But that was just five minutes too late. Richenda had seen a new Lucille Davenant—a Lucille with the cloak of gay carelessness fallen away, the real Lucille.

And Richenda Peterson was shocked to the very soul.

Lucille was almost groveling in apologies now. But somehow those very apologies struck a false note. Richenda wanted to get away from the hard, close-set blue eyes. She felt hurt, shaken, uncertain of herself. She escaped to her own room at length and stood for a moment gazing into the mirror by the window.

"It is a lie," she addressed the reflection. "There wasn't any Aunt Joan! That woman is crooked. She meant to use me. She thought Richenda Peterson was a soft little tenderfoot who could be led by the nose. She has learned better now and she doesn't like it." A satisfied laugh broke from her lips. "She's trying to use Brett Fairways, too. I wonder if he sees it. Men are less suspicious than women. I wonder what I ought to do now. Cut away from them and leave him in her clutches? No—no—no—I don't quite think."

No, most decidedly she didn't want to leave Fairways in Mrs. Davenant's grip. The great, big, trusting baby! It would be rather cruel. Then it suddenly struck her that had Brett Fairways been any other man she might not have felt this keen desire to

remain in the company of these two.

She . . . yes, she liked Brett. liked him rather a lot. Suddenly she found herself wondering just how much she liked him. The answer was disturbing.

Then she was back to the old question—was this man, whose face she had seen in her dreams, going to play any real big part in her life?

She'd stay the course and see. She hoped that Lucille would not make that impossible now.

But honey could not have been sweeter than Mrs. Davenant.

"Dick, I'm a hysterical beast!" she said. "Darling, I grovel in the dust at your feet. It was nerves—outrageous nerves! Dickie, I'd better 'fess at once to you. I do have these wretched outbreaks sometimes, and then I say the most awful things to those I love the best." She dabbed a scrap of cambric into one eye and gave a little sniff. "Of course, dear, I was just

worried to death. Dickie, I ought never to have asked you a thing like that. It put you in a beastly position. I—I didn't realize. You see, I've always had such lots of money it seemed the wee-est sum to me. I was at my wits' ends just then, Dickie—scared stiff, sort of felt myself 'on the rocks.'" She sighed, then suddenly brightened. "But, of course, you are right. The solicitor people are sure to advance me whatever I want. I'll cable today. I'll never speak of money to you again, darling, if you'll only forget my silly tantrum and be friends."

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XVII.

A Destined End.

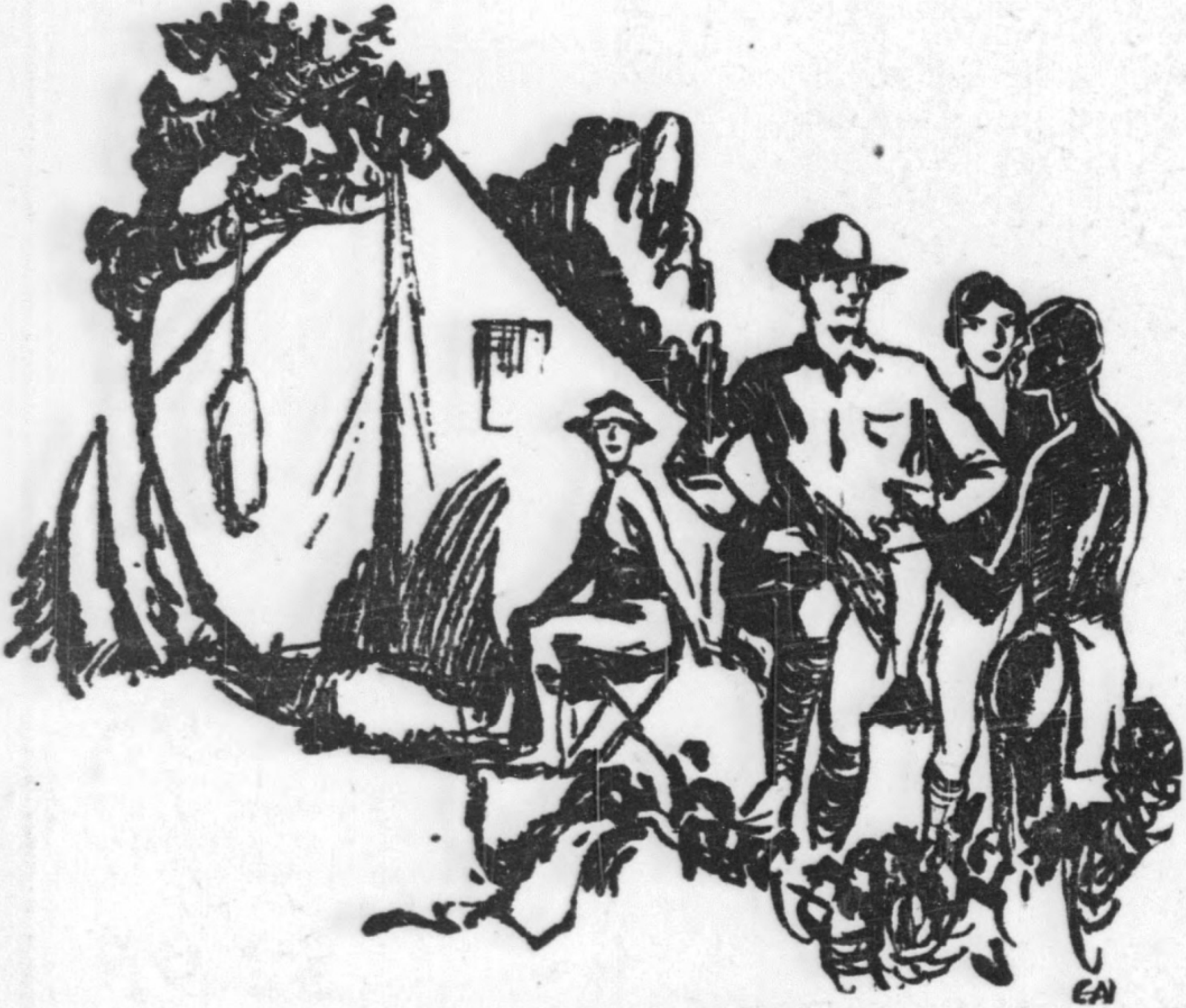
LUCILLE slipped soft fingers into Richenda's hand, gazing up into her face appealingly.

"Lucille, I'm glad you realize," Richenda's voice was steady. "You see that was a mighty sum of money to me—and—and, well. don't you think it puts friendship in an uncomfortable position when—when——"

"Dickie dear, I'll never mention such a thing to you again. Please, please shake."

Richenda shook the little hand. Yet, even as she did so, a queer premonition warned her that never must she trust this fair haired woman, for she still felt that behind this proffered affection there was something she did not understand—something treacherous.

She tried to put the feeling away, tried to get back some of her own frank friendliness, and the more she



"PLENTY KONGONI, PLENTY ZIMBA."

strove in this endeavor, the more that warning voice in her soul told her that Lucille Davenant was playing a game with her, and had been playing a game with her from the very moment they met.

A queer dogged obstinacy made Richenda vow that she would find out what plot lay behind those close-set blue eyes.

Well, she, Richenda Peterson, could play games too when it suited her purpose.

"Don't bother about it any more, Lucille," she said. "Of course you were overwrought. Let us forget it. We'll go and have tea and talk of—hats."

The following week Richenda, Lucille and Fairways left Nairobi on the somewhat deferred shooting expedition.

Mrs. Davenant was entirely her gay charming self again. She exhibited a gentle solicitude for Richenda's welfare and her attempts to wipe out the memory of her unpleasant outburst were rather pathetic.

"I've sent the cable," she whispered, "and they have wired back that it's quite all right. I can have as much as I want. Oh, Dickie, why was I such a fool that morning?"

The three were, apparently, back again on their old friendly footing, but that little warning premonition which told Richenda not to trust this woman was still in evidence, though outwardly the girl was friendly as before. In her heart she knew that it was not for the sake of Lucille Davenant that she had agreed to join this trip.

Something new had come to Richenda Peterson, something strange, which gave a little heightening color to her cheeks, something which at odd moments brought lilting snatches of song to her lips.

She was going to analyze that something. She was content to let the fate that had brought her to this unknown country lead her blindfold on. Somewhere in front there lay a destined end.

And Brett loved her! His eyes, touch, and smile were telling her so more frankly as the brief days passed by. Soon his voice would tell her, too. So there had been a definite meaning to her dream.

A verse she loved came across her mind:

"'Two shall be born the whole wide world apart . . . and bend each wandering step to this one end—that, one day, out of darkness they shall meet, and read life's meaning in each other's eyes."

Life's meaning! She had read it in Brett Fairways' eyes. She wondered if her own spoke as plainly. She wonderful if Lucille saw, too.

And—glorious thought — nothing could come between them! He was hers—she his—by destiny.

Now they were going out to the wide silences, away from the dusty crudeness of the noisy mushroom town. He and she together. For a moment she forgot Lucille Davenant.

Recollection come back with a tumbling rush and a little frown. But, by and by, Lucille would go back to England. Then perhaps . . .

"Night in the drowsy wilderness 'neath a myriad smilling stars . . . Night . . . with one other near."

The little song tumbled softly from her lips, then broke suddenly to silence and her eyes grew dreamy.

She was glad she had never known love before. It came to her fresh, un

touched. And Richenda went to meet it in wonderful frank purity—with the trusting innocence of a little child.

After some hours of traveling in the rumbling East African train, they dismounted at a tiny wayside station. The boys they had brought with them speedily stored the camp equipment into primitive bullock carts and the three Europeans took their seats in a rickety, mule-drawn vehicle, which complied to no particular standard of carriage. It appeared to depend much upon various bits of wire and rope for the keeping of its shaky parts together. Nevertheless, the Indian station master, from whom Fairways hired the thing, and who also supplied a driver who was supposed to be competent of guiding them to a good camping ground, demanded an exorbitant sum in return for the loan of these commodities.

The mules alternated between scampering along at a rattling pace which hid the bullock carts, following far behind, in a tremendous cloud of choking dust, and suddenly refusing to proceed at any rate at all. The more mangy animal of the two had a disturbing habit of attempting to sit on its haunches in the middle of the track—which could not by any shade of imagination be called a road—its companion was an adept at a certain type of side step which may occasionally be seen practiced in the modern ballroom.

The two women found this progress a new and very trying experience. They were glad when, half way up the slope of a grass-covered hillside, the vehicle was brought to a halt and the Kikuyu attendant, with an empty clay pipe stuck through a hole in the

lobe of his ear, indicated that the journey had come to an end.

"Plenty water near," he informed them. "Plenty kongoni, plenty simba."

"And what, my friend, may kongoni and simba be?" asked Fairways.

His own boy came forward as interpreter. "He mean game, bwana—buck and—simba. I no get your Inglees name for simba, but he make big noise so . . ."

A telling imitation of a fed lion was performed before them.

"That's frightfully exciting," cried Lucille. "Brett, you'll have your hands full taking care of two nice plump juicy females if there are many of those things around."

In an incredibly short space of time their little camp was ready. The four natives whom they had brought from Nairobi proved willing and experienced henchmen and the small canvas safari tents were quickly erected in a sheltered hollow half way down the round bosomed windswept hillside. Behind their camp mountains rose in broken chains and isolated clumps and stretched away to a mighty line on the horizon and below lay interminable miles of rolling plain, broken here by a patch of withered scrub, there by a rioting clump of jungle, farther on by the skirts of a great black forest.

Far away one or two small farms nestled on the slopes of gentle hill land. These lay among dark green patches of coffee plantation and, dotted around them, could be seen tiny moving specks which told of grazing cattle.

In a heat-bathed valley, near at hand, a cluster of native huts were grouped, low leaf walled dwellings crowned by domed thatches of ragged grass. Naked brown babies tumbled around them, wild-looking men with red clay molded in their hair, fashioned arrows over the heat of the tribal fire, while shaven-headed women, hung with heavy wire necklets, crooned over the cooking pots.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALMENT XVIII.

Fairways Woos Richenda.

IT was a lovely land—a land of wonderful mystery and color. Long bands of purple shadow floated across the warm brown of the distant mountains. Turquoise and amber butterflies danced among the clumps of creaking gray-leaved bamboos which lay behind the white encampment. Great patches of flaming "forest fire" hung, big petaled, among the aloe-green leaves of their mother trees and the fierce

A HAND THAT SEEMED LOATH TO LET HER GO AGAIN.

splendor of their tropic sun drew a shimmering, scintillating haze up from a meandering watercourse.

Far away in the distance a little train panted at set hours along a winding course and lost itself among the hills.

Night fell swiftly and the loneliness of the strange, wide silences seemed a tangible thing.

"Ugh—it's weird!" Lucille shivered.

"It's wonderful!" breathed Richenda. "Wonderful!" She stood at the tent door by Fairways' side, watching the moon rise. It came like a ruddy melon from behind the jagged black peaks that cut the sapphire skyline. They saw it climb rapidly into the heights, then slower, slower, till it shrank and turned silver as its course grew less.

The two gazed, fascinated by the sheer beauty of the tropic night. Down in the valley a solitary tom-tom began to beat a strang, wild chant, which came up to them in chorus.

Then things began to stir across the hillside—a night bird shrieked in the ravine.

A moment later a strange, blood-curdling wail cut through the darkness. Oo-oo-oo! Up the scale it went, an octave and a half, then down again.

"Are there lost spirits near?" whispered Richenda.

"No," he laughed. "Only a hungry hyena yowling his grace before meat."

Somewhere below them a wildebeeste snorted uneasily—a zebra gave its sharp, barking cry. Then suddenly a tense silence closed on the countryside.

Hard on the heels of a snarling grunt from far across the plain it came. Again—bigger throated. It rose and swelled till they held their breath in wonder at the volume of it.

"The king of beasts is abroad tonight," said Fairways.

Richenda raised her eyes to his as she gave him the old salute of Africa: "Good hunting!"

He took her fingers between his own in a gentle grip.

"Thank you, little comrade," he said. "Thank you."

The night welcome of the distant beast had fallen to a throbbing echo now—a cricket chirped shrilly in the grass at their feet—a mother bird crooned in the branches of a nearby tree. Africa was at peace again.

Brett Fairways still held Richenda's hand. He seemed to have forgotten it was there.

She stole a glance at his face in the moonlight. Then her eyes widened suddenly. His mouth was set tight, his chin thrust forward in a hard line. His brows were drawn together in a puckered, frowning ridge. Every trace of careless gayety had gone—every soft line had tightened. Suddenly she saw that in his face which had led him to force his way across uncharted lands. This moonlight showed Brett Fairways at his best—showed her, too, line by line, the face of the man of her dreams.

She marveled that he could change so. Then, without a word, he dropped her hand and strode across to his own tent, leaving her standing alone.

The next two days they spent quietly.

"Mercy me, we want to rest our bones after that awful mule cart," Lucille complained, and, laughingly, the others complied with her wishes.

Fairways' sleeping tent was separated from that of the two women by a third, which made the common room of the party.

"We must share, Dickie," Lucille had said. "I'd never dare to sleep alone in this awful wilderness!"

Some 50 yards further distant was the canvas apartment of the four native boys.

One of these stood guard as night watchman and tended the two blazing fires which Lucille insisted should be kept on either side of the encampment.

"My dear girl, if you keep your tent flap fastened at night nothing on earth will attempt to get inside," Brett assured her.

"But I haven't read books of adventure for nothing," she answered. "I know all about the 'big hungry eyes that gleam across the firelight' and 'the angry snufflings of baffled beasts who dare not approach too near the glare' and . . ."

"Stuff and nonsense! There isn't a thing on the countryside that won't make off as fast as it can at the first crack of a pistol," he laughed.

But Lucille got her fires.

The two women had adopted the usual dress of the Kenian hunting camp. The loose, limp blouse suited Richenda's boyish beauty. Her knees, showing at first milky white by contrast with the khaki shorts she wore, burned rapidly to healthy tan.

A tall, slim, dark eyed lad she looked—a beautiful, brown boy, crowned with a mass of rioting dark curls.

Brett Fairways saw and wondered at the new loveliness of her. Lucille, carefully massaged, whose suggestion of Bond street perfume hung incongruously about her new attired self, saw, too, and a little evil glint came into the hard blue eyes.

On the third day Fairways and three of the boys went out after big game. Lucille showed no inclination

to join the expedition. "I didn't come up here to tire myself out killing things," she said. She was getting slightly irritable lately, Richenda decided. "Dickie and I will stay here with Jeroge while you go out and chase the beasties."

He returned that night with the satisfied air of a hunter who has done well.

"No," he told them, "we didn't see the whisk of a lion's tail. I think the hunting of those gentlemen is mostly night work, but—look what is coming."

Progressing slowly up the hillside on the shoulders of two weary natives they saw the roughly decapitated head of an enormous buffalo. The horns from tip to tip spanned some 4 feet across.

"Good hunting, comrade," he smiled at Richenda. "Buffalo is twice as hard to get as lion and 20 times more dangerous. Moreover, there is another lying dead behind that hill over there. The boys will get the horns for me tomorrow. And there are a couple of buck coming on behind with Macheria and Kilimani. I picked these other chaps up on the road and promised them mingi basksheesh if they would bring those horns along.

"Whoo-oo, I'm grimy! Hoy, Jeroge," he summoned the native boy.

"Is my bath ready? Say, girls, I guess we'll have champagne for dinner."

. . . . . .

The next evening out on the lonely hillside of the "drowsy wilderness 'neath a myriad smiling stars," Brett Fairways told Richenda Peterson that he loved her.

It came suddenly—a quiet stroll together under the warm, soft darkness—a sudden stumbling over an unseen branch—a lean hand shot out to steady her—a hand that seemed loath to let her go again.

Then she was held tight in his arms, the arms of the Fairways whom she had always sensed existed behind that mask of gay carelessness. Yet even Richenda was a little frightened at the forceful strength of his wooing. He did not plead. He did not even proffer her a stereotyped proposal of marriage. Neither did he make the tentative inquiry of the modern lover: "What about it, old thing?"

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XIX.

FAIRWAYS WINS.

FAIRWAYS caught her to him till her breathing grew strangled, kissed her on hair, brow and mouth, tilted her chin up till she had perforce to gaze straight into his eyes, and—

"You've got to marry me," he said. "You've got to marry me!"

Richenda laughed. "After all, it is really just as well. I rather want to," she murmured shyly.

Then they heard Lucille's voice calling to them from the white tent in the moonlight beyond.

The wonderful moment was over.

"When shall we tell her?" whispered Richenda.

Fairways frowned. "Not yet," he said, "not yet. Leave that to me."

But, back in the camp, she saw a queer gleam in Lucille Davenant's eyes. She had an idea that this fair-headed woman missed very little of what was going on about her.

Richenda, too, had sensed lately that Lucille had made frequent excuses to leave her alone with Fairways. There had been pleas of sick headaches, of fatigue. She was possessed of an odd idea that Lucille had been watching them. There were times when she found something leopardlike about Mrs. Davenant — something that

crouched, waiting, watching for an opportunity to spring. As the days went on a strange dislike for this woman was growing in the girl. The fact that there was no apparent foundation for the feeling affected it not at all. She did her best to crush it down, but it grew, and at times she feared that this distaste, strengthened in spite of all her efforts, must be

apparent to Lucille. But Lucille was still sweetly charming to Richenda.

That night in the dimly lit tent that the two women shared together Mrs. Davenant paused suddenly from her vigorous hair brushing, and regarded Richenda with steady eyes.

"You are getting awfully pretty, Dickie," she said. "I have never seen such a sudden change in any one."

Richenda flushed in slight confusion.

"And—and—" the soft voice was very measured, "Brett, too, is beginning to look different—more serious—more . . . "

She left the sentence unfinished, with calculated effect.

Richenda made no answer.

Then: "Oh, you silly, silly billies!" This was amused laughter. "Do you think I haven't got eyes in my head?"

She said no more then, but changed the subject adroitly, much to Richenda's relief. But Richenda knew that her queer sixth sense was right.

Lucille had been watching for some time past—watching the love between them bud, blossom. Nothing had evaded her. All that there was to know she knew. Again there flashed across Richenda's vision that queer mental picture of a crouching leopardess . . . waiting.

The days in the little encampment passed pleasantly onward. The two women occasionally joined Fairways on his shorter hunting trips now. Richenda learned to shoot fairly straight, but she found it hard to overcome her dislike at dealing out death in the wild. The time was curiously lacking in adventure. So far Fairways had not carried out his proposal to go out at night after lions. He realized that it would be impossible to leave his companions alone on the hillside through the dark hours. Often the three heard lions across the plain, but, up to the present, they had not been able to catch sight of any.

Sometimes they spent hours wandering through the luxurious forest that lay round the foot of a nearby mountain. Richenda loved the forest. Here jade and purple butterflies riotted among the strange scentless flowers and the little striped squirrels ran up and down the gnarled trunks of the twisted trees. Once she came suddenly to a jerking halt as a piece of black whipcord writhed suddenly across the grassy track a few inches

from her feet. There was death, sudden and inexorable, hidden in the slim head of that flashing streak. Death, silent and insidious, in the heart of the voluptuous forest. But Richenda walked on unheeding. She felt that not even death could touch her now, leaving her destiny unfinished.

Fairways and she had very little time alone together. There was, too, something new about her lover which perplexed Richenda. His laugh came more rarely. His mouth was set in a stern mold. Often he went off for walks by himself. More than once she had come upon him with Lucille in muttered conclave together, and she had seen a strange, rather bitter smile steal round his mouth at times he deemed himself unobserved.

These things perplexed the girl, rendered her rather unhappy. Sometimes more than a day went by before she had a moment alone with him. Twice Lucille had gone off for a short walk with him. At these times she noticed that on his return Fairways was strangely silent.

Richenda chafed slightly. She wanted to understand things better. But, in those rare moments when she found herself alone with her lover, his kisses carried her along on a tide of such sheer happiness that her questions were never asked. Richenda was strangely unsuspicious. Nobody had ever deceived her. Brett loved her. That was enough for her. By and by when she had him to herself she would understand him better.

They had been a fortnight in the camp when Lucille congratulated her on the engagement.

But Richenda was determined to fall into no trap.

"Are you guessing?" she asked dryly.

"No. Brett told me. He says it's going to be very soon, too."

"Really!" Richenda felt a sudden anger. This woman seemed to have learned more than she herself knew.

But Lucille had a friendly arm linked in her own now.

"Don't be cross, Dickie. Brett and I are very old friends. Besides, you naughty thing, I think you might have played fair and told me yourself!"

If Richenda looked for a shade of jealousy in Lucille Davenant, in common honesty she had to admit that she found none. Indeed, Lucille laughingly vowed she would leave the lovers to themselves as much as possible. She removed herself to her sleeping tent on every possible occasion. She brought more than one dull flush to Fairways' face by teasing innuendoes—more than one angry frown, too. Indeed, times were when Richenda found it necessary to range herself on Lucille's side.

"She doesn't mean it, Brett. Don't be so stupidly cross, dear."

He caught her suddenly close to him then, there in the dark shade of a sheltering tree.

"Dick—you've got to marry me now—at once—next week,' he said a little incoherently. "I want to be rid of that woman!"

The vehemence of his tone startled Richenda. She gazed up at him wide-eyed.

"But, Brett . . . ." she began.

"I can't wait—I won't wait. I might lose you yet. As soon as possible. Do you hear? Do you? Tomorrow if it can be done!"

She opened her lips to demur, and he closed them again with a flood of fierce kisses. The strength of this man of hers hypnotized Richenda. She felt little, impotent, drowned in the great love that clouded round her.

"Girl, girl, you hear me . . . "

"Brett, Brett, darling . . . " She could not go on.

But both of them knew that Fairways had won.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XX.

The Wedding Ceremony.

THE days before her marriage seemed to Richenda to pass on winged feet. Everything had happened at a tremendous rate. She was swept off her balance with the rapidity of it all. Brett was so determined. He had

"THINK IT OVER, DEAR," HE SAID HUSKILY. "WALK SLOWLY AND VERY CAREFULLY."

a sort of "now or never" look in his eye against which the girl found it difficult to battle.

He said but little about the coming wedding, but took all arrangements into his own hands, and Richenda found herself consulted on very few points. Somehow she liked the new masterful Brett Fairways all the better for this.

It was rather delightful to feel that the man she loved so deeply had taken over the ordering of her life completely. Nobody had ever taken care of her like this before. She had had to battle along alone as best she could, and ofttimes the path had been hard and wearisome. Now all that was to be changed.

Again came the conviction that destiny had arranged this new way along which her life should go. She would not fight against that destiny. She would follow this man of hers along the path he chose to travel.

She gave up teasing argument, tentative questioning.

Why should they wait? In a year's time she could scarcely love him more than she loved him now. It was impossible that she would love him less.

She trusted him implicitly, and Fairways held her to that trust.

Lucille Davenant, too, was very kind. She entered enthusiastically into the talk of future plans with the girl.

Gradually Richenda lost some of her suspicion of this woman. Surely Lucille had made amends! No trace of jealousy was apparent in her demeanor. Indeed, as before, she showed every desire to make the path as pleasant as possible for the lovers.

Once she said, a little pathetically: "Dickie, dear, would you think it perfectly awful if I asked to stay on with you for a little while after the wedding. I can't get a berth on any boat going home till the end of next month, and it would be so terribly lonely sitting in a Nairobi hotel all by myself."

"Of course, you must stay on with us, Lucille," answered Richenda gen-

erously. "Why should we let this sudden marriage of ours spoil your holiday? Let us carry out the first arrangements and finish the safari in the proper way!"

"I'm so glad, Dickie," Lucille sighed with evident relief, "I know Brett wouldn't mind. But perhaps you might have . . . you see, young wives usually want their husbands all to themselves."

"Not in modern times," laughed Richenda. But she didn't quite like that remark, "I knew Brett wouldn't mind!" The past tense suggested that the two had already come to a decision on this point.

She put the thought away from her, deeming it unworthy.

Richenda had written several times to Angus Brodie, whose little coffee farm, she discovered, was only a few hours' journey from the encampment. The second week of their arrival on the hillside Brodie had paid a surprise visit to her.

"And how in the world did you get here?" cried Richenda upon espying him.

"Why," he laughed, "the railway siding down there is the usual halfway house for petrol—and, as it is your postal address as well, I knew

you wouldn't be far off. So, having nothing so terribly urgent on hand just now, I thought I might spend the afternoon paying a call!"

With the usual hospitality of the colonies, they instantly invited him to stay the night.

He needed but little persuasion.

"All going well, friend?" he found

opportunity to whisper to Richenda.

"I—I think I'm going to be very happy, Angus," she breathed.

He gazed fixedly at her, read all there was to know in her smiling face.

"Think it over, dear," he said huskily—"walk slowly and very carefully. And, Richenda, if ever you want advice or help, remember your promise to come to me."

She nodded. "Angus," she said, "there will never be any need to come. But still——"

"If ever . . ." he began.

"Yes," she acquiesced. "If ever—then I'll come straight to you!"

The marriage ceremony was to take place at the district commissioner's office in the nearby hamlet. Then the party was to come back to the little encampment on the hillside for at least another fortnight.

Privately Richenda thought this arrangement rather strange. But she realized that her position in the matter was slightly awkward. If she demanded the usual honeymoon seclusion, Lucille, who, after all, had joined this shooting trip understanding that it was to last several more weeks, would be most unjustifiably left "at a loose end."

Besides, people didn't bother much about honeymoons these days, she decided.

And what could be better than a honeymoon in the wilds, even if there were a third person with them?

Anyway, she would have all the honeymoons she wanted alone with Brett after Lucille had caught her homeward-bound boat.

Fairways seemed to see nothing extraordinary in the continued presence of Mrs. Davenant after the wedding, nor apparently did he consider it unusual that they should spend pre-wedding and post-wedding days in the same encampment. Indeed, he did not discuss the subject at any great length. All his endeavors seemed to be toward hurrying the marriage forward as quickly as possible.

Richenda decided to let him drive his own course. Later on she would fashion things more as she wanted them to be. Just now circumstances were a little too strong for her.

Early one morning they walked down the hillside to meet the hired car which waited at the foot.

"Dickie is not going to drive into Abdera in that awful mule-gharry," Lucille had decreed. "And as for me—if I'm to do the 'dame of honor' business properly I insist on a smooth trip!"

They covered some 25 miles in moderate comfort. To Richenda it seemed a strange journey. Brett spoke but rarely; but, now and then, she caught him smiling to himself. She realized suddenly that there were strange hidden depths in this lover which she had yet to plumb. Once she was caught by a sense of fear, and Angus Brodie's words came back to her, "Walk slowly . . . carefully." And she had not

done either. Just as she had plunged suddenly headlong into love, so she was plunging headlong into marriage. She wondered what wise Jean Anderson would have said about it all. She would have been horrified, of course.

"My dear, what is his income?" she would have asked. "And who is he, and where are you going to live."

And Richenda couldn't have answered any of these things satisfactorily. She loved him. He was hers. That was enough. She would trust her dream of those months ago.

The wedding ceremony was very brief. Richenda vaguely murmured a few words, signed her name in a little blank space that some one's finger pointed out—saw Fairways sign his. She didn't even read the document.

Then Brett kissed her; somebody else was shaking her hand, and Lucille was crying in a shrill, high voice, "All the luck in the world, Mrs. Fairways!"

Then they were hustling into the hired car again, en route for the encampment.

It seemed strange to Richenda. Not like a real wedding. Why, they had even forgotten to order a cake!

Then her spirits rose again. She was married—really married—and to this wonderful silent man who sat by her side.

(Continued Tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXI.

Richenda Hears the Truth.

THE wedding party was back in camp now. The boys had lunch ready — lobster mayonnaise, champagne. After all, it was a wedding breakfast!

It was after the meal had ended that the extraordinary thing happened.

"Richenda," Fairways said, "you are looking very tired. Go into the other tent and rest a while."

She paused uncertainly. "My tent," he said, gently.

She moved, unspeaking, across the grass with Fairways behind her. Once inside he halted, placed both hands on her shoulders, gazed steadily into her eyes.

"Dickie, will you promise to do exactly as I tell you?" he said.

"Why, Brett——" she began.

"I'll explain things a bit better later on, dear. Meanwhile, don't question me. Dickie, I want you to stay here and rest the whole of the afternoon—alone. Will you promise?"

"But, Brett, this is all very mysterious. Why on earth should I——"

"Because it's the first thing in our married life I ask you to do. Richenda, darling, just to please me—won't you?"

He could be very persuasive, this man of hers.

"Why, Brett, of course I will if you really wish it," she answered, a little grudgingly. "But—what are you going to do?"

"I shall go for a walk." He turned to the door. "Now, sweetheart, I hold you to your promise."

The flap of the tent came down with a thud and Richenda was alone in the cool gloom.

She sat on the little camp bedstead deep in thought. It was all so strange—so mysterious. What an extraordinary wedding day! The camp was very quiet. She half expected to hear Lucille's voice outside her tent. But no Lucille came. She wondered what explanation Brett had made for her own solitude.

Well, anyway—if this queer husband wanted her to rest, she would rest.

And she was a little tired, too. This getting married was a fatiguing business.

The tent was cool and quiet; she stretched herself on the little bed.

Five minutes later Richenda Fair-

ways was asleep. And in less than 15 minutes she was awake again!

She didn't know what roused her. Perhaps it was Jeroge rattling his cooking apparatus a short distance away, she decided.

She sat up rubbing her eyes. She had been dreaming—extraordinary dreams all about ships and stormy seas and miles of weary travel. She must surely have been asleep for a long, long time!

She glanced at her wrist watch. It

"BUT, BRETT"—THE WOMAN'S VOICE WAS PUZZLED.

had stopped. Funny! She must have forgotten to wind it last night. What disturbing affairs weddings were, to be sure!

There was no clock in Brett's tent, either. Anyway, she must have slept at least two hours. She'd peep out and see if Brett were back yet.

She undid the tent flap and went out into the sunshine.

"Wapi bwana boy?" she inquired of Jeroge.

The bwana, he told her, had gone into the bamboos, and he pointed to a clump of forest a short way down the hillside.

She paused uncertainly. It would be rather fun to run and meet him . . . the big, silly husband . . . ordering her about so early in their married life!

The boy was speaking again now—slowly, with laboring English. "And the memsahib 'Divnan' she go wit' 'im."

That decided Richenda.

Barely a quarter of an hour after Fairways and Mrs. Davenant had left the encampment, Richenda was following in their path.

She caught a glimpse of the two forms before they disappeared into the shade of the bamboo forest. She sped quickly down the mountain side, half angry, half amused, and wholly puzzled. On reaching the trees she paused for a moment to recover her breath.

Then suddenly she heard Lucille's

voice strident and harsh with anger: "You fool," she was saying, "do you think you are going to get rid of me as easily as that, Brett Fairways?"

Amazed, Richenda drew closer into the forest. She could see them through the green screen now. She moved on, then halted again, uncertain whether to approach them or to go back.

Brett's brows were drawn together in an angry frown. She saw that his hands were clenched till the knuckles shone white through the tightened skin, and Lucille's lips were drawn back from her teeth in a snarling grin that had something oddly feline about it.

It dawned upon her suddenly that these two were at bitter enmity.

Mrs. Davenant was speaking again shrilly, scornfully: "Five hundred pounds! Bought off for five hundred

pounds! Why, the girl alone has five thousand!"

Richenda turned white. She moved a step forward. She could no longer play the eavesdropper.

"Leave my wife out of this!" she heard him say.

A ripple of mocking laughter came upon his words:

"Your wife! Since when has that trusting, brainless idiot been your wife? She——"

But something in his face startled even Lucille Davenant then. She left her words unfinished.

The world whirled suddenly about Richenda's ears. She was incapable

of movement. Some strange force held her silent, motionless, listening.

"And if I say she is . . . my wife?"

"Then I could tell her that she is not!"

"And you would happen to be wrong, Lucille! By heaven, woman," he flamed into sudden rage—"did you think I was as evil as yourself? So you imagine I haven't seen through your hell-woven plots from the very first moment you started to weave them? You knew well enough that I loved Richenda. You threw us together deliberately. Then, by and by, you whispered: 'She's not the sort to countenance love intrigues. She'd be shocked to the soul. If she knows you are not free to marry her she'll be off like a shot and you'll lose her forever. Take her,' you said—'marry her. Richenda need never know the marriage isn't legal!' Oh yes, you told me all that in sweetest sympathy. But I didn't trust you, Lucille. I know now that more than once you must have found blackmail a paying game. Bigamy is a nasty word, isn't it? Most people would pay a big sum rather than hear it applied to them! And you thought you could inveigle me so easily into a bigamous marriage which would provide you an income for innumerable years to come,

didn't you? Lucille, I've been a rotter, but I'm not a blithering fool!"

"But Brett——" the woman's voice was puzzled.

"That marriage stands, and neither you nor any one else on this earth can upset it!"

"What utter rubbish!"

"Not at all," his tones were measured now. "You see, dear lady, Monica died quite a while ago. True enough, the information only reached me in Nairobi. Nevertheless——"

She broke in, choking with fierce rage:

"And you never told me!"

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXII.

Flight.

"Would you have let Richenda marry me if you had known?" asked Fairways.

"By heaven, no." Lucille was half frantic with hysterical passion. Her face, ashen white under the rouge, with gray shadows round her drawn lips, was a repellent sight.

"Of course you wouldn't; you might even have decided to marry me yourself;" he laughed grimly. "At any rate, this I know well enough, you would have told Richenda things about me which—which would have probably sent her 'right-about' at once. If they hadn't, you'd have drawn upon your imagination, Lucille.

"Oh, I know that well enough. I'd have been no match for you there. I should probably have lost her altogether.

"You hated Richenda from the very first. You only simulated friendship with her in order to get your fingers on her money. When you found she was a match for you, you set about evolving some new plan. And when you saw I had begun to care your plotting took a villainous twist and you thought, poor fool, you thought you could make me villainous, too!

"You thought I fell headlong into the trap. You marveled at the sheer simplicity of it all. You were going to bleed me then and, some day when I had nothing else to give you, you would have told Richenda! Frightfully simple, wasn't it?"—he chuckled grimly—"and I went into it like a lamb, because we both knew I'd no chance of getting her any other way! But, my friend, I've got her now, and you connot upset the marriage!"

"I don't believe a word of it," her sullen voice was dull with rage.

He took some papers from his pocket.

"Three letters," he said, "even the death certificate! Isn't that enough? Moreover, you'll see I described myself as 'widower' on the marriage form today. Richenda didn't notice that. There are no joints in the armor, Lucille."

And now his tone changed suddenly. "What will you take to go away and let me begin afresh?" he said.

She flung around upon him, teeth set in fierce rage.

"Not a sou! I'll go to the girl and tell her everything!"

"You'll tell her?"

"That back in England you were my lover—even on the ship."

A little white face strained through the bushes now waiting to hear him fling a vehement denial at this woman. But no denial came.

Instead his lips whitened suddenly, the anger fell from his voice and a little trembling note came in its place: "Lucille I—I thought I cared for you. You—you'd surely never tell Richenda that!"

Neither of them heard the faint rustle in the bushes as she broke out of the shady gloom of the forest edge, running, running she knew not whither—anywhere to still the pain in her throbbing heart—anywhere to get away from this man who had so outrageously deceived her. Husband of one woman, lover of others, self-confessed a roue and a rotter. The woman had been after her money. How did she know that the man, too, had not married her for that paltry five thousand pounds?

She wanted to get away. She must think this thing out.

God, how she had loved him. And now? Now, so great was the revulsion of feeling that she felt love had turned to hate.

She ran blindly down the hillside—on . . . on . . . anywhere away from those two who so outrageously deceived her.

They, all unknowingly, still stood facing each other among the bamboos.

"Lucille—Lucille," he was saying, "we've both been pretty bad. But Richenda is different. She—she wouldn't understand. You've got an evil power over men, Lucille. And I—I hadn't much faith in women. Monica robbed me of it those years ago. Poor soul, I ought to let her memory rest in peace now, but—well, you know how she treated me. It—it was enough to send any man off the rails. But Richenda is different," he said again, "I want to get back on the rails, Lucille. I want to start afresh. It wasn't as if you ever really cared for me, Lucille!"

"Oh, as for that"—she gave a bitter

THE DEVILS." HE SAID, "THEY'VE CLEARED."

laugh—"caring hasn't entered much into my calculations! It's been hard enough to get the money I've needed! Brett, if it hadn't been for this awful mess I'm in at home, I might not have used you like this. But I had to get two thousand from somewhere. You hadn't it, but I thought I could force you to get it out of the girl for me——"

"You can't do that," he said. "I'd rather she knew anything than touch a penny of her money to buy your silence!"

"I'm—I'm in a corner, Brett!" The anger had gone from her voice. It was curiously dull now. "It's—oh, you may as well know the truth about that letter! It came from my sister's husband. They are rich and—and it was about a check. He is threatening legal proceedings unless I refund the money."

"What did you do?" he asked dryly.

"I—I, well they gave me a check for a thousand—it seemed so easy to alter the words and figures. I made it four thousand. And now—and now—oh, he's a brute—a brute." Unconsciously she used the words Richenda had heard her mutter on the day that very letter had arrived. "He won't listen to Grace. He says he is going

to make it awkward for me. Brett," she was frightened now, "he is threatening awful things if I don't pay the money back. Brett, Brett, can he—can he?"

"I don't think he'll go as far as that, Lucille," he answered the fear in her eyes. "I'll do the best I can. I'll give you seven hundred—that is, of course, if you'll leave the camp at once without a word to Richenda. But I warn you—one sentence to her, and you'll not get a penny! Be wise, Lucille."

"I'll take it, Brett," she said. "I've been a beast, I suppose, but the woman who is forced to live on her wits has a hard path to travel. She gets . . . different."

"You must go now," he said, "at once. Richenda won't be up yet. And the car is still waiting at the foot of the hill. I told them to do that."

"You were pretty sure, Brett," she said ruefully.

"I meant to make no mistakes. Lucille," he spoke very soberly now. "Go home to your people and start straight again—as I mean to do with the little girl up there. I want to forget that you and I ever met. We never really cared for each other—it was only a passing madness. But

I love Richenda. It is different now and——"

He broke off abruptly, raised a puzzled eyebrow. From far below they heard a sudden warning hoot, saw a crowd of loitering natives scatter before a moving motor car, saw it rush on, leaving a cloud of dust behind till it suddenly disappeared round the hillside.

Fairways cursed beneath his breath.

"The devils," he said, "they've cleared!"

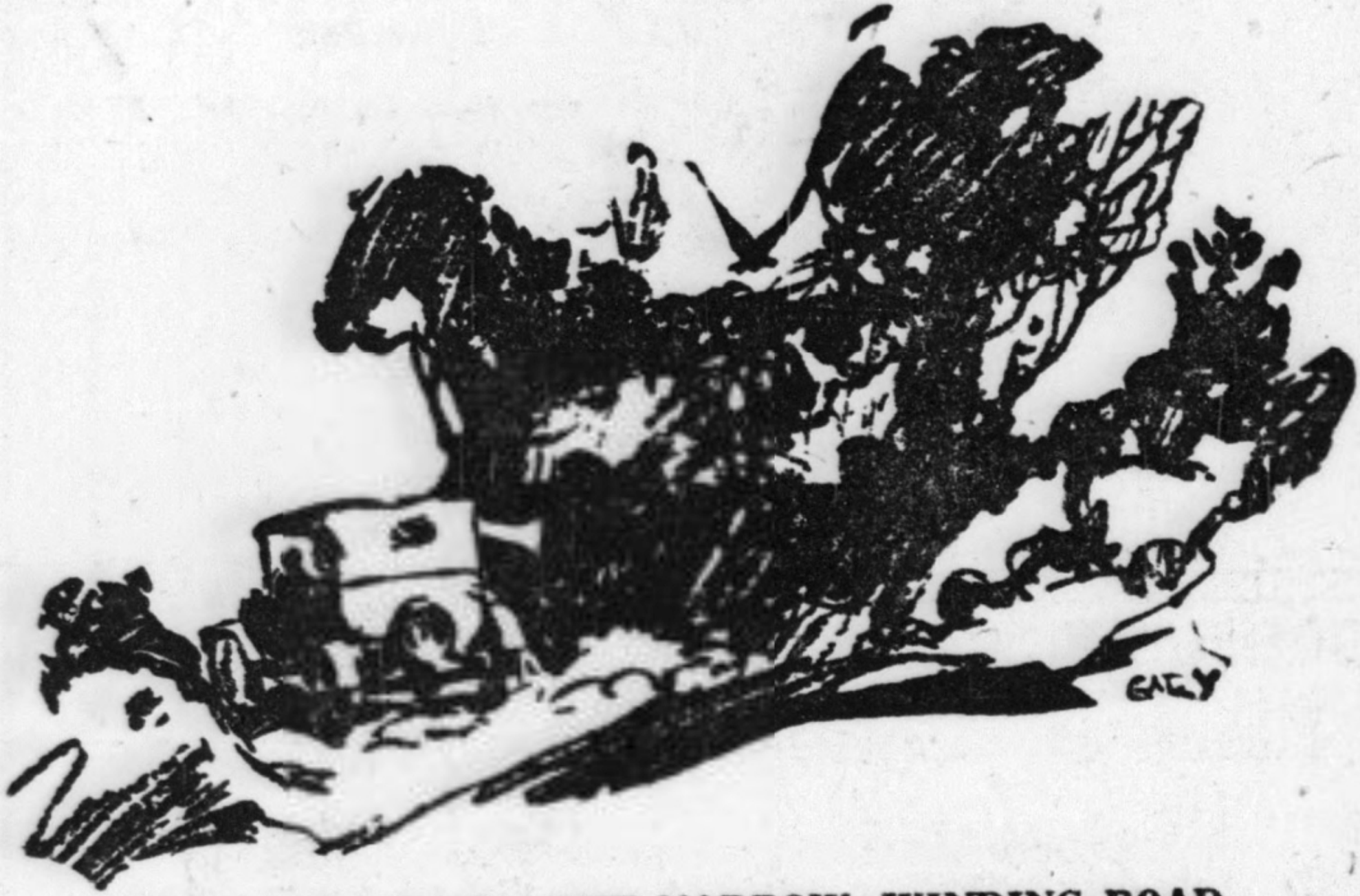
But the distance had been too great for either Fairways or Lucille to notice a slim figure sitting tensely upright in the back of the car—a figure with tight lips and pain-dimmed eyes, the eyes of Richenda Fairways.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXIII.

There Is Still Angus.

IN the years that came after Richenda Fairways had no recollection of how she passed down that hillside into the waiting motor car. She only knew that she had run blindly on with that great agony tearing at her soul—on, anywhere, so long as she could get far away from those two who had so outrageously deceived her—the woman who had met



THEY TORE DOWN THE NARROW, WINDING ROAD.

her with little pawing hands and cooing voice; the man who had proffered something which she, in the innocence of youthful idealishness, had accepted as love.

Love—he couldn't know the meaning of the word! Love—it was a thing of crystal purity. How dared he bring to it lying lips, unclean heart, the knowledge that, so near behind him, lay a liaison with such a woman as Lucille Davenant?

A great surge of anger flooded over Richenda then. He had laid siege to her untouched heart; had taken it, knowing all the while that he was not worthy, knowing that he was stained, smirched. Laughed at her, maybe, for a trusting fool!

Things were getting distorted in her distraught imagination now. Perhaps it was merely the money he had wanted! Lucille thought only of

money—Lucille, the woman who had been his. "Birds of a feather," the old adage ran through her mind.

And she had loved him. And now she hated him. Ah, God, the pain of it!

Her feet had taken her, unheeding, down the short, grassed slope of the hillside, till suddenly the mental agony became physical, too, in a great stabbing knife-thrust through her side. She halted, swayed a little, breath coming in broken jerks. Then the mist cleared from her brain. Presently those two in the bamboo forest above would miss her, would search for her. But they must not find her. She must get away. Away? Where in this strange, new, lonely country could she go? Where could she go?

"Richenda, if ever you want help, come to me! Promise me that." The echo of Angus Brodie's words hammered across her brain. In the torment of the upheaval she had felt so alone. There had been nobody to whom she could turn. Then suddenly that blessed remembrance came back. Angus! She had forgotten him. How strange to forget her friend like that! Angus! Her heart leaped in new relief. Oh, thank God, there was still Angus, and now she must get to Angus.

Angus.

It was at that moment that she saw the hired motor car at the foot of the hill—the car that, though Richenda did not know this, was waiting to take Lucille Davenant away from the little camp forever!

Five minutes later Richenda was in that car, urging the astonished boys to start the ancient engine and be off. They needed but little persuasion. They had been told to await the coming of a memsahib. Here she was.

"Wapi kwenda?" inquired the driver.

"To Lambogru," she told him. "Go to Lambogru."

The boy gasped amazedly.

"But, memsahib, Lambogru is very far! It is now nearly four o'clock. In two more hours the sun will set and we shall not get there till long after dark."

"Go to Lambogru! Hasten!" she commanded.

"But there is not enough petrol!"

"Stop at the railway siding for petrol. Be quick. I want to go now!" Her hands were clenched in her excitement till the knuckles grew chalk white.

"The road is very bad, memsahib. It will be dark—and there are lions."

But not all the lions of the countryside could have stopped Richenda now.

She leaned forward to the demurring native who stood twiddling his dusky bare toes in the dust of the roadway, his brow knitted dubiously.

"If you get me to Lambogru tonight," she said, with slow emphasis, "I will give you four hundred shillings!"

Half a minute later the car, bearing the red-fezzed driver and a blanket-clad apprentice on its front seat, hooted joyously and tore down the road, leaving a long white haze of dust behind it.

The halt at the railway siding was brief. Richenda dared not wait to have the petrol tank filled, but took the unopened tins bodily into the car. Later on, when they had put some miles between themselves and the encampment, they would halt and attend to the wants of the antediluvian vehicle. Meanwhile, her only thought was to get away—far, far away.

The natives regarded her perplexedly. In this land of tropic leisure they could not fathom the need for such undue haste. But the memory of her promise of that enormous sum of money was in the satisfied mind of Ali Mutagayo, the Swahili driver. If the memsahib wanted speed, he'd give her speed!

So they tore down the narrow, winding road between the rolling hills, every joint of the car shrieking as the

scurrying miles flew to the rear of them. Here and there came great holes in the road, over which Ali Mutagayo careered in gay insouciance, the vehicle bouncing terrifically, till more than once Richenda's aching head came thudding against the canvas cover above her as she was hurtled bodily upward from her seat.

Some 30 miles they covered in this mad career. Then came an ominous, jerky wavering in their progress, a grinding wail from somewhere in the vitals of the car, followed immediately by the clamp of hastily applied brakes, and Ali, with a cheerful grin, forthwith descended to discover the cause of the trouble.

Richenda had regained something of her composure now, but she felt very tired, very miserable. And that greatest of all woman's needs was upon her, the need for a cool pillow where she might bury her hot face and cry and cry and cry.

Ali was rattling the bonnet cover now, twisting nuts, tapping joints, cocking a shrewd head sideways with calculated impressiveness, doing a dozen absurd, unnecessary things, as is the way of the African native when he is tackling something he does not understand and desires to imbue onlookers with the belief that he knows all about it. It was well for Richanda's peace of mind that she had no

idea that, up to a month before, Ali Mutagayo had never handled the driving wheel of any car!

She felt no particular anxiety at the unexpected halt. Indeed, she welcomed a brief rest. She felt safe in the knowledge that the camp was many miles behind now. Of course, they had discovered her flight by this time, but they would have nò means of following her yet, and, even when they could start, they would have no idea of her intended destination. They would have to pick up a trail which had diverted more than once to branching roads, and thus would be difficult to trace. Moreover, in this country of solitude, there were few who had seen her car fly by, and of those it was probable none would meet Brett Fairways, since, with one exception, they had been natives plodding homewards to tribal camp fires.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXIV.

Delayed Again.

RICHENDA sat back, glad to rest from that jangling, bumping flight over the uneven cart track which could scarcely be dignified by the name of "road."

But the machinations of Ali Mutagayo were longer than Richenda could countenance, and it was well past 5 before by sheer good fortune he discovered the cause of the trouble and triumphantly explained matters to Richenda.

"Pace! Pace!" she implored him in her scanty Swahili, duplicating the phrase in anxious English, "Oh, hurry, hurry!"

He smiled cheerily, "Minutee tano," he promised.

"Well," she agreed, "minute tano—just those five minutes! Not a minute more!"

But "minutee tano" to the leisurely African is on the level with that place which they say is just over the hillside," and which turns out to the perplexed European to be somewhere ten miles beyond the far horizon! In Ali's case "minutee tano" stretched well beyond half an hour!

At last, to the relief of all concerned, they were off again. The sun was setting behind a range of distant mountains now. Richenda watched its last red beam vanish into the gray of the quick passing tropic twilight. The road had grown very narrow,

scarcely more than a cart track. The wheels of the lumbering native ox wagons had cut deep ruts along it and the center part was full of awkward holes.

They were on a rolling plain which stretched for interminable miles in front of them. A solitary place it was. Richenda could see no sign of European habitation on all that great countryside. On her left was a tiny collection of native huts nestling at the rim of a patch of withered scrub, and from these leaf thatched, mud walled beehive dwellings came the clack of Kikuyu voices. After that there seemed nothing but the solitude of

"SHE BUST!"

the plains with their wandering herds of zebra and snoring wildebeeste uneasy at the approach of night, which invariably meant danger in the wilds, stalking amber-eyed danger that came silently upon them till, with that voiceless sudden spring, the thing was sucking the life blood from their very throats.

The pink, flushed twilight had faded now. Night was drawing moonless skirts about them.

Richenda suddenly felt a shade of apprehension.

"How much farther is it?" she demanded.

White teeth flashed upon her through the gloom.

"Just over the hillside," answered Ali Mutgayo cheerfully.

It was quite dark now. The dim lights of the car showed only a few yards of the road in front. Ali was driving more slowly, picking his way through the gloom.

Once a big, shadowy body dashed across the road ahead of them and

halted not 10 yards at their right hand. Great eyes gleamed yellow in the lamp light. Richenda wondered vaguely to what enormous beast those menacing eyes belonged.

Once a scuttering ostrich, feathers all a-flutter, fled squawking before the strident shriek of the horn. A score of things that they could not see rustled through the darkness about them.

Richenda, urged into mental effort, reckoned that they must have covered more than 40 miles. Surely, oh, surely, the farm must be very near now! The car crawled painfully on, slower now, still slower. Then, with a sudden wail, they came to a standstill.

"Oh, dear," said Ali Mutagayo in his politest English, "Oh, dear!"

"Damn it!" said Richenda. "Damn it all!"

Another 20 minutes, with Ali's head under the bonnet, burrowing into the works that "wouldn't go," by the dim light of the hurricane lamp held by the blanketed toto.

Richenda was out on the road now.

The chill of the tropic night had drawn around them. She shivered through the thin silk of the simple frock that had been her wedding dress. Suddenly something of her position came home to her. Alone on the solitary veld in the darkness, her only protection two primitive natives, who would most assuredly look after their own skins before giving a thought to hers. In the distance she heard a queer, muffled sound, dull at first, then rising in cadence till she knew that only one beast on earth gave tongue like that. A lion's roar! There was no mistaking it! Even through her heart-broken misery there suddenly ran a chill of human fear.

But the two natives showed no sign. They knew that lions could be relied upon not to interfere with human beings while there was food in plenty on the zebra-infested plain.

Richenda was back in the car now, huddled in the corner of the seat, listening to Ali Mutagayo tinkering interminably with screws and nuts.

From behind a far-off mountain ridge shot up a pencil of silver light. She hailed the coming of the moon with a whispered prayer, watched its rim creep slowly above a jagged peak till with a sudden bounce it leaped, a globe of orange glory, into the velvet sapphire of the sky.

Then she saw the face of Ali Mutagayo at her elbow. Not smiling now—something childishly bewildered about him.

"She no go," he said simply. "She bust."

"Good Heavens!" Richenda shot upright in her seat. "You must make her go."

"Bust!" came the laconic reply again. "She bust!"

"Perhaps," ventured Richenda, "if we push her a bit she might pick up."

Richenda did not know much about cars, but the antediluvian specimens that careered along Kenian roads seemed often to respond to pushing. She got out, put her back in workmanlike fashion against the rear of the car and pushed with all the strength of her young body, Ali and the blanket-wrapped toto puffing in exertion beside her.

But "Elizabeth" showed no signs of "picking up." Occasionally she gave an enthusiastic snort and careered by her own exertion over some five yards of road, only to stop dead with a gasping snuffle and wait till her helpers came to her again.

They gave it up at last.

"Not a yard more!" gasped Richenda breathlessly. "Not a single yard! I'll take whatever the gods are sending for me."

She was in her seat then, two big tears coursing slowly down her tired cheeks. Cold, hungry, alone—all the woes of the world seemed balanced on her slender shoulders.

Ali Mutagayo came to her side again. She wondered how he could smile like that.

"Memsahib, I think there is a village over there," his broken English told her. "This is the native reserve."

So that was why they had seen no sign of European habitation all these miles!

"If the memsahib will promise plenty of baksheesh for the Kikuyus perhaps they will come and push us."

"Baksheesh? Every penny I possess!" she breathed fervently.

He was off then, speeding across the

plain in the moonlight, followed by the scared toto, leaving her quite alone.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXV.

A Whirlwind Ride.

TIME seemed unending before Richenda heard the native returning, accompanied by the dull pad of many feet, the clack of excited tongues. Then Ali hove in sight, some 20 primitive natives speeding with him.

All of them approached Richenda with a welcoming yell, and all of them, oil rubbed but never by any chance water bathed, carried also to her fastidious nostrils a most unattractive smell. Coconut oil, red clay, half-cured furs and the odor of unwashed bodies—everything that should not be was in that smell!

Now they were around her, smell and all, half a dozen at the back, some seven or eight each side, urging "Elizabeth" into triumphant motion till she careered over the ground in pace with their flying feet.

"Aya colombi!" yelled the com-

mander of the gang. Some sort of encouraging hail this, which the natives use at times of effort. Something untranslatable, meaning "Get a move on! Put your back into it, brothers! Heave ho!" and a dozen other things as well.

"Aya colombi!" roared the crowd in

"NOT A CENT!" SHE SHRILLED. "NOT A CENT TILL YOU TAKE ME TO THE BWANA BRODIE'S FARM!"

ear-splitting chorus as "Elizabeth" groaned up to the crest of a low hill.

"Aya colombi!" sopranoed the toto, riding in state by Ali's side on the front seat.

"Merciful Heavens!" besought Richenda, crouched in a little heap behind.

The hill topped, "Elizabeth" took unto herself wings as she sped down the slope in front. Brother Kikuyu, seeing no need for effort, anxious to try the new sensation of riding aboard this rattling iron monster, glued himself on every available niche the car could offer. Some half dozen sat on each side door; two, bolder than the

rest, sprang to the rug on Richenda's feet; one sprawled on the cushion at her side; one perched himself astride the rattling bonnet, and the ancient "four-seater," seating rather more than 14 for once in her checkered career, tore down the hill with the speed of a mad rhinoceros, every nut, every bolt shrieking at the insult of the unaccustomed weight.

"For pity's sake, get off!" Richenda implored unheeding ears. "We shall all be killed!"

She dealt one youth, precariously balanced, a frantic dig into the ribs that protruded leanly under his nude, brown flesh. The onslaught caught him unawares. He crumpled suddenly, gave a wild shriek and fell with

a whirlwind sprawl of arms and legs into the oblivion of the dust behind them.

The crowd sent up a yell of appreciative mirth.

Richenda, terrified now, turned to the others.

"Get off!" she screamed. "Get off!" prodding right and left with battling fists. "Oh, driver, driver, make them get off!"

But Ali Mutagayo, hands paralyzed on the wheel, every sense intent on steering this thing that tore like a whirlwind over the ox-cart track, entirely forgetting in his inexperience that brakes existed, had neither eye nor word for his distressed fare.

Came a series of holes. Richenda and the clay-daubed gallant at her side bounded up to the cotton hood above, came down, bounced again six inches off their seats. The youth on the bonnet rattled against the wind screen till the glass threatened to shiver in the frame, and a shriek of fresh delight came from the uninvited cargo.

"This motoring—it is damn fine!" was the burden of their Kikuyu-couched appreciation. "M'surj sana! Excellent!"

They reached the bottom of the hill in a few seconds, which had seemed time immeasurable to Richenda, and "Elizabeth" came once more to a wheezing stop.

Then, with a moan of disappointment, the score of nude bodies descended into the road and once more took up their labors.

"Aya colombi!" came the voice of the leader of the chorus. "Aya colombi! A-a-ya colombi!" they roared in unison, and strained their muscles upon the car again.

Richenda sat back breathlessly. The smell of the rank bodies about her, the raucous yells of them, the thundering, bouncing motion of the car—it was all a nightmare. She felt suddenly weak, so weak that she scarcely cared what might happen next. And the bitter chill of the East African night was eating into her bones.

Another hilltop, another leaping surge of oil-rubbed bodies, another wild song of delighted triumph, more rattles, more bounces. A longer slope this time, steeper. And the hands of Ali Mutagayo were not steady on the wheel now. The thing was running a zigzag course, scudding over the ground till the rush of the wind bade fair to suffocate the girl on the back seat. There would be death at the end of this—death underneath a surging mass of brown, bleeding, stifling bodies!

And she didn't care. She was past caring now, past praying.

When they rattled to the end of the slope this time Richenda had sagged in her seat, white as death, unconscious of everything about her. How many more rises they topped and left behind she never knew. Things flew by in a whirling, gray mist. Time was not. It was the voice of Ali Mutagayo at her ear, the touch of his hand on her arm, shaking her gently, concernedly, that brought her senses back.

She opened her eyes, saw a forest of cupped palms thrust close about her.

"Memsahib, here is Lambrogu," said Ali Mutagayo.

"Baksheesh, baksheesh, baksheesh!" chorused the wild men of the forest, already well versed in the "tipping" propensities of the European tourists.

"They must take me to the farm of Bwana Brodie," she said faintly but inexorably. "It is in Lambogru."

It was as well that she did not realize that the sparsely populated district of Lambogru covered a very large area and that the Brodie farm might yet be a goodly distance away.

Happily, at that moment a white-kunzaed house boy passed on his homeward way and directed Ali Mutagayo to the required homestead, which proved to be barely a mile farther along the road.

But, having reached Lambogru, the clan of helpers was curiously reluctant to proceed a yard farther. They sent up a clamor of tongues which, interpreted by the harassed Ali, gave Richenda the information that their wives were all alone, and their children were sick, and their parents were dying, and the lions were eating their herds, and the village would probably be burnt down, and they didn't like to "go home in the dark," and a score of other complaints too numerous for translation. And the united chorus of their clamorous anthem was "Baksheesh, memsahib, baksheesh!"

Richenda braced herself then, clutched her little beaded handbag more closely between her fingers, squared her small chin at a pugnacious angle, faced them—that odd score of unclothed savages—faced them, spears, smell and all.

"Not a cent!" she shrilled. "Not a cent till you take me to the Bwana Brodie's farm!"

Twenty brows frowned ominously, 20 pairs of hands twitched hungrily. Then through 20 primitive brains ran memories of the doings of the white raj under whose protection this frail, slim, flashing-eyed creature stood.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXVI.

Sanctuary!

THERE had been that little affair down by the river last month when a fever-ridden European had just—only just—escaped with his life. Some 14 of their brothers and sons were languishing in penitence at this very moment for that. Yes, the might of the white people behind this fragile woman was very great. Some 20 pairs of eyes suddenly flickered evasively as two score of hands went out to urge "Elizabeth" still farther on her rattling way. White blood had won!

Richenda giggled suddenly as the fact came home to her. All those big,

PRESENTLY HE WAS BACK AT HER SIDE.

brawny savages cowered into obedience before her eight-and-a half-stone self! It was really funny.

"Aya colombi!" they were chanting good-humoredly again. One more rise in the road. She caught her breath as they topped it. This awful country of ups and downs! One more shrieking, rattling career of descent. Sometimes it seemed that all four wheels skipped bodily in the air. Yells, smells, prods, she went through the whole gamut of it again. Then came a sweeping turn into a yet narrower path, the car within an ace of "turning turtle." Then a ripping, crunching, tearing grind—Ali Mutagayo had found the brakes at last, and then a sudden flare of light through an open doorway, a voice:

"And what in the name of all that's wonderful——"

And Richenda tumbled out through that forest of outstretched palms full into the amazed arms of Angus Brodie. He bore her through the crush that opened left and right before a series of kicks from his heavy-booted foot. Cold, hunger, misery and fright had sent her again into merciful oblivion, and Brodie, his kind brows puckered in marveling consternation, carried her straight through the living room of his tiny two-roomed, single-planked bungalow into the yet smaller apart-

ment which formed his bedroom.

It was long moments before she came to herself again. He was standing by her side, chafing her hands, holding smelling salts to her nostrils, agitatedly, after the manner of inexperienced males, trying to do half a dozen other things at once to restore her to her senses.

He gave a sigh of immense relief as her eyes slowly opened. She looked so ashen so fragile, lying there motionless, with the disordered waves of her short black hair tumbling around her quiet face.

He raised her, curving his arm behind her head, held brandy to her quivering lips, spoke low, soothing words. Full consciousness returned to her—the fresh agony of those hours before in the remembrance of what had urged her to this man's side, and she turned her face suddenly, like a little child, into the crook of his elbow and burst into a passion of tears.

He waited silently until the storm had passed, then asked her quietly:

"What is the trouble, Richenda?"

But so great was her distress and weakness that she could give him no coherent answer.

"Angus, Angus, you told me to come to you if ever I wanted help. So I've come now. You must let me stay here for a little while. Oh, please!"

"Why, of course, you must stay," he soothed. "There's nowhere else you could go at this time of night, and if there were I shouldn't let you go in this state."

It was true. His nearest woman neighbor, some four miles across country, was a person whom Brodie strongly disliked. He had no intention of subjecting Richenda to her idle, scandal-loving tongue.

"Angus, Angus, if they come, you'll bolt the door and keep them out——"

"They? Who?"

"That woman and—and——"

"Do you mean Mrs. Davenant and Fairways?"

She nodded wordlessly.

"But," he stammered, "Richenda, I though you cared for Fairways! I thought you were going to marry him soon."

"I thought so, too," she answered the first part of his speech, "but, Angus, I hate him now! I never want to see him again! Angus, he is bad—bad right through! I—I——"

She was trembling violently now, white-lipped. The culminative strain of the last few hours was rising to its crisis. Something of this suddenly

became apparent to Brodie.

"Not another word!" he commanded. "You shall tell me all there is to tell in the morning. Lie down quietly while I get rid of that howling mob outside. Then we'll have some hot soup ready for you—I shouldn't be surprised to find that you haven't had a meal for [illegible]—and we'll tuck you

up all warm and comfy, and tomorrow morning you can talk to your heart's content."

He smiled at her as he paused for a moment in the doorway. Then she heard his voice among the importunate crowd outside, and presently the noise died in the receding sound of departing bare feet, one last delighted whoop of thanks and good-night greetings from Ali Mutagayo and his helper as they departed to spend the night in the servants' quarters at the back of the house.

"Kwa heiri," their voices came to her.

"Kwa heiri," Brodie's deeper tones.

Then she heard him moving around the living room. Came the pop of a lighted spirit stove, the swish of pouring liquid, the clink of a spoon, and presently he was back at her side with a steaming bowl queening the center of the tray he bore.

While she took the meal Brodie was moving quietly about the room, laying a pair of gay pajamas over the foot of the bed beside a cozy dressing gown, putting a ewer of hot water on the washstand.

"More?" he smiled as he surveyed the foodless tray.

"No, thanks." A faint pink flush was on her cheeks now. Her eyes were heavy with fatigue.

"Then good-night, little girl. Sleep well." And without another word he was gone.

But sleep did not come easily to Richenda. For an hour she lay with her pink pajamaed arms tossing uneasily above the blankets, a thousand thoughts hurtling through her distraught mind.

And this should have been her wedding night in the tiny camp on the solitary hillside, under the laughing stars—alone with the man she had loved. Her wedding night! And she was here alone in another house. Resting, with no fear now, under the kind protection of a man on whom she had no claim—fled from the one with whom, by the law of the land, she was made one!

She heard Brodie stirring softly in the living room as sleep claimed her.

And Brodie, teeth dug well into the stem of his worn briar, was gazing deep into the glow of the reddening

logs in the grateless fireplace, thanking his God that he had been at hand to serve this woman, who filled his every waking thought.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXVII.
Fairways Follows Richenda.

BRETT FAIRWAYS had sworn vehemently under his breath as he saw the car which should have taken Lucille out of his life forever drive in a cloud of dust around the curve of the hill and disappear from sight.

An amused giggle from the woman at his side had added fuel to his anger.

"How will you get rid of me now, Brett?"

"You'll walk to the railway siding," he answered tersely. "If you start in half an hour, you can catch the 5 o'clock train into Nairobi."

She gave vent to a stifled exclamation of annoyance, then smiled a little grimly. After all, she would get that £700, which meant a great deal to her at the present moment. Moreover, there might yet be a time ahead when she could use this man for her own purposes. At present she had lost this round of the game. The wisest thing for her to do was to fall amicably into the line of action he demanded of her.

He was making his way up the hillside now.

"Come on, you'll have to hurry!" he called.

She padded silently behind him, her high little heels catching in the clumps of tufted grass as she came.

As they reached the encampment, Fairways' anxious eyes went at once to his tent. And the flap of that tent, no longer tied securely, was suddenly drawn aside, and there appeared the figure of Jeroge, a pile of Fairways' clothes over his arm, a brush in one hand, apparently intent on proceeding with the valeting duties which were part of his daily labor.

Fairways was by his side in one moment, peering into the dimness of the tent.

"Wapi memsahib?" he demanded.

The memsahib, the boy told him, had gone to meet the bwana by the bamboo forest. She had walked down the path up which he came.

With a word to Lucille, who was already embarked upon her task of hasty packing, Fairways was striking down the hillside again.

"Richenda! Richenda! Dickie!" His voice echoed among the trees.

Suddenly he saw a little patch of white on the grass ahead. Her handkerchief! He picked it up, mechanically fingered the silk-woven initial in one corner, stood for a moment as a man frozen in his steps.

"Merciful Heavens!" he whispered. "She came here. She must have heard it all!"

He knew now why that car had suddenly elected to depart. Conviction came to him that she had gone in it, and he, poor fool, had stood in his ignorance and watched the very going of her.

Where had she gone? Ah, that was the question to which he must find an answer.

The next hour was among the most trying ones of Fairways' life. In an incredibly short time he was hustling Mrs. Davenant on her way to the railway siding, two panting boys following in the rear with her suit cases. To Lucille he had not breathed a word of his discovery. She went, believing that Richenda still slept in the camp behind.

A few words by Fairways to Jeroge, who understood elementary English, sufficed to gain the information sought. The slumbrous native nodded his head vigorously. By all his gods, he had seen a car go! Had it not nearly ground him beneath its iron feet as it leapt in starting? Oh, yes, there was a memsahib in it—a mem-

sahib whom he had seen coming running down the hill. And she had cried that they should speed much. Which way? He scratched his clay-bedaubed head and pointed vaguely down the road: "Oh, that way."

"But ask him what the memsahib said." Fairways was fidgeting in excitement now.

"She said, 'Pace, pace' (hurry)," came the reply.

"But pace where? To Nairobi? To Nakuru? To——"

A light of comprehension came into

"BRODIE, LET ME IN! I WANT MY WIFE!"

the dusky face. "The memsahib said, 'I will go to Lambogru,'" he told them.

It was exactly three hours after the engine which bore Lucille out of his life had steamed away that Brett Fairways boarded a trundling goods train, which by good fortune would arrive at the small station of Lambogru somewhere about midnight.

Richenda stirred uneasily in her

sleep. Through her dream ran a dulled suggestion of some one hammering. She could hear the muffled beat of it. She was floating down a country lane curiously at ease, and somewhere in front there was a pile of stones. Men were thudding blows on those stones, chipping them into flying pieces. She turned on her side. What a noise they made! She wished —— There it was again, louder now, near at hand. And they were calling, calling hoarsely and insistently. Her eyes opened slowly, the mists of sleep still clouding them. Yes, somebody was calling—knocking and calling.

Came the scrape of a chair across the wood-planked floor of the adjacent room. Then Brodie's voice in penetrating calmness.

"Who are you and what do you want?"

Another voice quick in answer. Richenda's feet swung suddenly over the side of her bed, the last shadow

of sleep vanishing in a single instant.

"Brodie, let me in! I want—my wife!"

She was over at the door now, fumbling with the key, turning it in the lock—turning it against the threatened coming of her husband—she who had not thought of turning it between her and the man whose shelter she had sought. There she stood, white-lipped, behind the door,

her bare feet powerless to move on the cold wooden floor, motionless, listening.

Not for one instant had she imagined he would trace her so quickly. He had known, of course, that Brodie's farm was at Lambogru, but how was it possible that he should have guessed at once that she would come here?

And having guessed, how could he know so definitely that she was in the house? Richenda forgot the telltale presence of the car in front of the door.

"Let me in! I want—my wife!" It was the last two words that came so unexpectedly upon Angus Brodie! He had never for an instant imagined that the wedding was an accomplished fact. He had taken it for granted

that Richenda was still free to go whither she willed. But now matters had suddenly put on a fresh complexion. Brodie, the child of generations of rigid Scottish Presbyterians, held marriage as something indissoluble. "Let no man put asunder"—that was part of his creed regarding it. Richenda free, calling upon him for protection, was an allowable thing. He would shield her with his very life and need consider himself answerable to nobody. But Richenda married was part of this man outside the door—this man who called in possibly righteous anger that access be no longer withheld from him. In common fairness, Brodie must hear what he had to say.

He had shot back the bolt of the outer door then, trusting hopefully

that Richenda in her weariness had slept through the few brief moments of noise.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXVIII.

The Sore Heart.

IT was a strange Fairways that strode into the room upon the instant of unbarring. His boots were thick with dust, his clothes creased and stained with the dirt of the goods train, his face lined with the grime of traveling, set in cold anger. One glance round the room showed him that it held only themselves.

"Where is she?" he demanded tersely.

"She is asleep," answered Brodie gently. "She came here three hours ago, fainting with weariness and fright. She had scarcely strength to speak. Whatever has happened—and I know nothing of the matter as yet—for pity's sake let the girl have rest for awhile. It would be sheer cruelty to wake her to fresh worry just now."

"She can come back to the camp and rest there."

A score of unanswerable questions had thronged through his mind during those weary hours of traveling. And now, finding that Richenda really was within his reach, there came a dull rage that she should have dared to treat him so, to leave him without a word of explanation—without a

chance to make a statement of his case, to go so silently, to make her way these miles across the wildest country and to throw herself upon the protection of a man who was almost a stranger to her—a casual acquaintance met on an ocean voyage, a man who might, for all she knew, be a questionable character! And she had come here—at night—to this

man's house—was asleep in his own room, maybe!

"Will you kindly tell me," he demanded, "just why you should appoint yourself protector to another man's wife?"

"Oh, damn it all" — Brodie felt a

"GO AWAY. I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN—NEVER—NEVER."

rising irritation—"perhaps you'll tell me first just why Richenda should find it necessary to leave your hospitality so suddenly—and, after all, I've only your word for it that she is your wife!"

"What reason did she give for coming here?"

"None. She was far too weary and distressed to give reasons. She left them till tomorrow morning."

"Well," flared Fairways, "there won't be any tomorrow morning, so far as you're concerned. She's coming with me now!"

His eyes had swept the room, discovering the door which he knew must lead into the sleeping apartment of the tiny house. He strode over to it, laid fingers on the handle.

"Now, look here, man," Brodie was by his side again, one hand on his arm.

"You can't do this sort of thing. I tell you the girl is absolutely worn out. It isn't human to wake her and worry her."

"Get out of my way!"

But Angus Brodie had the sudden temper of the Scottish Highlands. A cold blaze came into his blue eyes as he knocked Fairways' fingers from the door handle and planted himself squarely in front of the door. Fairways, too, saw red then.

"Damn you," he said, between set teeth, and planted a sudden crushing blow full upon the mouth of the man who barred his path.

Brodie, caught unprepared, rocked blindly on his feet for a moment. Fairways was at the handle again

then, turning it fiercely with one hand, battering against the wooden panels with the other.

"Richenda," he called hoarsely, "open this door or I'll break it down!"

She was facing them then, the hem of her pink pajamas showing some inches below the robe loosely wrapped about her, bare feet veined blue with cold. The wide dark eyes glowed purple—shadowed in the white face framed by its dark riot of disordered hair.

Both men fell back a step as the sudden apparition came into the frame of the wide-flung door. It was to Fairways that she spoke in that weary expressionless voice:

"Go away," she said "I never want

to see you again . . . never . . . never."

He had her prisoned by an arm then.

"Why do you say that?" he demanded.

"There in the bamboo 'forest—" her words came weakly, haltingly—"I saw you—both. I . . . heard."

"What did you hear?"

"I heard enough to make me hate

the very touch of your hand on my arm!" She clawed with futile weakness at his fingers. "Go back to the woman who was yours before I came —who may have been yours since . . ."

"Richenda"—his voice broke suddenly—you don't think that . . ."

Something of cruelty came to her now. This man who had made her suffer! Whatever pain it was in her power to inflict upon him, that would she deal out to him!

"I neither know—nor care, now," she said dully.

"Richenda, dear . . . you don't understand!"

Brodie, drawn back a yard or two behind them, was a silent onlooker, something of a revelation coming to him. This man loved her, that was clear. Whatever he had done in the past it was apparent in the pleading words that came now from his very heart that Richenda's influence, through the love he bore her, would have done much to steer him into clearer waters.

"I would have told you, Richenda—you are so young—so innocent, you might not have understood. I dared not risk losing you. I wanted to begin all over again—to forget everything else to . . . to . . ."

Yes, whatever this man had done

he had wrought no concrete harm toward this girl.

But the obstinacy of weariness was upon her now. He had hurt her . . . God, how he had hurt her! Shattered in the dust, her ideal lay in pieces at her feet, and the pain of it gnawed through to her very soul. What a fool she must have seemed to them—an innocent, ignorant fool! How easily they had blinded her! Fairways and that other woman . . . that other woman . . . No, she couldn't forgive—the hurt of it would be there all her life!

Had Fairways been an older, wiser man, he would have understood then that the wounded heart of the woman he loved was too sore for sudden healing. Time and tender treatment would do much toward restoring a wider outlook to her. And Richenda was very unversed in the ways of mankind—intolerant with the intolerance of ignorant youth, overidealistic, bewildered with the sudden pain that had come upon her. But where she was concerned the very love he bore her made Fairways blunder sadly. He could not let her slip away from him—he dared not. He must keep her by him, willing or unwilling, till wider understanding had come to her. Perhaps if her heart had really turned from him it might come

into the keeping of this man whose protection she had sought. Fear, mixed with a sudden jealousy came to him then. Yes, she had fled from him, her husband, to this other man —this man whom she had known before—trusting him, willing to spend the night in his house, putting her honor in his hands. And this man had fought to keep her here, to bar him, Fairways, from her.

Anger was rising again now. It burned still fiercer at her next words as they came, wearily, expressionless, yet bearing their tinge of cruelty.

"Please go away. I don't want to talk to you. I can never trust you—never believe you again . . ."

He gave it up then. That dogged obstinacy which had carried him through so many dangers in his explorations in unknown countries was upon him, allied to the sheer strength of a personality which had always assumed mastery over his fellows when leadership was necessary.

(Continued Tomorrow)

INSTALLMENT XXIX.

The Return Journey.

FAIRWAYS studied Richenda silently as she stood there, slender and fragile, before him, defying him, scorning his pleading, telling him with weary politeness that he was everything she most disliked. Liar, roue, cad, the meaning of each vile word was in the cold scorn of her carefully chosen sentences. If she had raged at him, flown at him with tearing fingers, he could have borne it better; he would have known that soon the paroxysm would wear itself out. But this sneering scorn, these biting, chosen words, called out a sudden, quick deciding anger in him.

"Well," he said, "I am quite willing to believe that you hate me, but you are coming with me, just the same!"

She gave no answer, but put her

"OH!" CRIED RICHENDA, TERRIFIED, "YOU HAVE KILLED HIM"

fingers on the door to close it in his face. But Fairways was inside that door now.

"You are coming with me, Richenda."

"I am not," she flared, a red patch of anger flaming in each cheek. "Nothing on this earth would induce——"

"You are coming with me." The dull repetition of it brought silence upon her. Then:

"You wouldn't dare——" she began.

"You are coming with me—now!"

Conviction came upon her at his tone. Here was a man gone past the possibility of bending to her will.

Brodie spoke at last. "Richenda, is it true you are this man's wife?"

"Yes," she replied dully.

She saw his face fall then, and suddenly something of the weakness of her position came to her. She had no right to bring Brodie into this matrimonial muddle. It was perfectly clear that Fairways intended to brook no interference. The stronger man of the two, he would assert his rights by physical force if need be—of that she was very sure.

She was back in her bedroom now.

"Get your clothes on," Fairways told her tersely. "I'll have the car ready in a few minutes."

She heard him sound the horn furiously outside, heard the alarmed Ali Mutagayo come tumbling out of a door somewhere behind, intent on finding out what had happened to his disabled charge, heard a sudden, "The darned fools! Not a drop of water in the radiator! No wonder she wouldn't go——" cut short the driver's account of the troubles of the journey, and presently there came the steady chug-chug of an engine recuperated again. And still she sat on the edge of the bed, bare feet peeping from beneath the ends of the pink pajamas. Feminine perversity then. At any rate, she'd keep him waiting!

He was in the room a minute later.

"Ready?" he asked her.

"No!" she flared.

"Well, you've had loads of time! I'm not waiting any longer!"

"Pray don't. I shall be very glad to see you go."

"Your friend's pajamas will not

make the ideal motoring kit"—she could have flown at him then, dug her pink nails in undignified rage into his flesh—"but we'll borrow a couple of blankets from his bed as traveling rugs so you won't get cold."

He took her by the shoulder, guided her stumbling steps into the living room. Then it was that the flood gate of sheer temper opened within Richenda.

"I'm not going!" she sobbed in futile rage. "I will not go with you—you.....Beast!"

But Fairways threw back his head in an amused laugh and made no answer, only urged her firmly onwards.

"See here!" Brodie's shorter form barred their path, a light of determination shining in his fierce blue eyes. "You can't do this sort of thing nowadays, man. If she doesn't want to go——" he had fastened himself on Fairways' arm now, trying to tear her free.

The next few minutes passed in a swirling maze. Richenda stood petrified as the men swung to and fro, clattering against the rickety native built furniture of the small room. Brodie had no chance against this younger giant who was her husband; that was apparent rrom the first, though the little Scotsman fought gamely as a bantam cock, but in a few minutes he was weakening, panting under the undue strain of the contest. Then came the sudden collapse—the silence, and Fairways was standing triumphantly, with flushed cheeks and ruffled hair, above the form that had sagged at his feet.

"Oh!" cried Richenda, terrified, "you have killed him!"

"Divil a bit," came the answer back to her. "He's merely winded."

Brodie was trying to struggle to his feet now.

"A game little beggar," said Fairways. "But he should have had more sense!"

He turned on her then, caught her bodily in his arms and strode out to the waiting vehicle, wrapped the blankets round her, placed a cushion behind her head, jumped into the front seat of the car and took the wheel without another word, the amazed Ali Mutagayo sitting by his side, a wide-eyed toto balanced precariously on his dusky knees, and they were rushing

along the narrow track that curved across the veld.

Richenda sat wrapped in a whirling emotion of thought as the road flew under the tearing rush of the car. There was no battle left in her now. Something of the determination of this man, whose name she bore, had come home to her, something of his sheer physical strength. She wondered vaguely what would be his next move. In these few short hours since she had stood by his side in the small church he had become the veriest stranger to her in the realization that so much lay within him which she could not understand.

Gradually she sank lower into the cushioned corner, curled her bare feet closer into the huddle of the blankets, breathed more quietly, and at length the gracious mists of sleep crept over her again.

Fairways, with a face of stone, sat at the wheel. Not once since they had begun their return journey had he flung word or look to the woman in the seat behind him.

Came the clank of brakes again, a jerking halt, which brought consciousness back to Richenda.

"I'm sorry," his voice came at her side. "I'll have to trouble you to get up now. We've got the hill to climb."

As he spoke he tucked the wrappings more closely around her. Then, without another word, she was hoisted into those strong arms again, and he was trudging up the steep incline.

"There is no need for this sort of thing," she began angrily. "I prefer to walk on my own feet."

"Bare ones!" She could sense the sneering smile that came with those words.

"What does that matter to you," she flared.

"Oh, quite a lot," he answered coolly. "You see septic poisoning is not an easy thing to treat. It would take up a great deal of my time. So please don't make any more ridiculous suggestions."

She lay quiet then. No, one couldn't quarrel when one was lying powerless, hoisted a yard off the ground, in a man's arms, one's head pressed close against his shoulder.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXX.

Brett Is Suspicious.

ALI MUTAGAYO and his helper had remained at the bottom of the hill with the car. Richenda and Fairways were quite alone. Suppose she struggled, kicked, insisted on being put down? She wondered vaguely what he would do then. Shake her, perhaps, hold her tight till she could scarcely breathe? Master her? Oh, undoubtedly he would master her. He'd done that all along the line so far. Richenda, who had till now acknowledged no man as master, seethed in silent wrath.

No, she would give him no chance to assert his strength still further! She would cling to the shreds of whatever iota of dignity was left to her. Passive resistance for the present, anything else would simply court defeat.

Presently he put her down.

"If you don't mind standing a moment," he murmured in cool detachment, "it is a bit of a pull—up here—must get my second wind." (She spoke no word in answer.)

Another start, later another halt, then more jogging upward, upward, then the door of his tent.

"Please, please," she said, and broke off suddenly.

The flap of the tent she had shared with Lucille was fastened. She felt a sudden bewildered misery. No, she could not go in there with that awful woman—she couldn't! And yet——

"Oh, this is hateful," she cried. "Hateful——"

He was quiet for a moment, then: "I have no wish to force an unwelcome presence upon you," he told her. "You can go to your own tent if you will give me your word of honor that you will not leave it without my knowledge. Parole—you understand? You see, you will be quite alone, and I do not propose to sit on guard outside your door all night."

"But—but isn't she——"

"Gone," he answered briefly.

Richenda moved away from him with a sigh of faint relief.

"Your word?" he reminded her.

"I give it," she answered dully, and passed into the darkness of her tent.

She was still awake when the sun crept full above the sky line. For the past half hour the camp had been a clattering stir of movement. Presently came the summons of Jeroge as he paused with the usual early cup of tea outside her door and, close upon his entrance, the voice of the unseen Fairways.

"Please get up and dress as quickly as you can. We shall be ready to move in another hour." He strode off without waiting for an answer.

She noticed then that the tray bore a substantial breakfast. Vaguely she was glad that he had not expected her

"I'LL TAKE THAT CASE MYSELF," SHE SAID SUDDENLY.

to eat with him, for she was very hungry, but she felt that she could never satisfy that hunger in his presence. Every morsel would have choked her.

She had nearly finished dressing when the rattle of mule carts came to her ears. She pushed aside the tent flap and walked out into the chill of early morning.

Everything lay packed around her. Already the boys were heaving the "chop boxes" into the carts. Ali Mutagayo, who, evidently acting upon orders given during their night drive, had brought the vehicle up the hill at this early hour, grinned welcome to her as she came. How methodically Fairways planned everything! the thought ran through her. Masterful . . . inexorable . . . even in her anger against him there came, for one brief moment, a tinge of admiring wonder. This was the sort of man who, whatever his line of action might be, would never, through lack of thought, make mistakes.

"Have you packed your things?" he asked her.

"I have not," she answered a little sullenly.

"Please do so now—as quickly as you can."

She was surprised to find him in the tent at her side a moment later.

"I will help you," he said shortly.

"Thank you—I much prefer——" she began.

"We have no time to waste," he silenced her.

Richenda's nerves betrayed her to quick irritation then. No, she would not labor side by side with him! How dared he insist on breaking in upon her intimate seclusion in this way?

"Very well," she said a little childishly, "if you want to pack my things —by all means get on with it!" Then, turning her back deliberately upon him, she sank into a canvas chair, seething with silent indignation.

A short laugh with which he greeted her words did nothing to soothe her.

But, try as she would, Richenda could not prevent her anxious eyes stealing round unseen toward him. She knew how men packed! They stood about three yards away from the boxes and hurled in the things indiscriminately, swearing all the while at the nuisance of their task. But it took

her less than five seconds to discover such was not Fairways' method. In her ignorance she had made no allowances for those miles of wandering in the wilds that he had covered—miles during which he had grown skilled in every traveler's art, of which the expert and speedy packing of boxes is one of the most important. Happily, however, there was but little for him to do, as Richenda had "lived upon" two suit cases only in the camp.

He came across the locked writing case in which reposed her letter of credit, her bank pass book and the bulk of her ready money.

She straightened in her chair. Money, she might want that later on: conscious of an amount of something less than 3 shillings in her purse, the thought ran through her.

"I will take that case myself," she said suddenly, a little too eagerly.

"Why?" he fixed shrewd eyes upon her.

"Simply because I wish it," she evaded.

"I'm afraid that, in our present circumstances, the reason you give is not enough for me. Am I correct in sur-

mising that herein lies the means for a second escape from me?"

(Continued Tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXI.

No Escape.

RICHENDA'S angry eyes gave Brett confirmation. She was at his side now, fingers upon the black leather of the thing he held.

"Is that why, Richenda?" he insisted.

"Give it to me at once," she panted angrily. "How dare you! Oh, how dare you!"

He laid his hand across her own to take those quivering fingers from the case, kept them in his grip a moment, drawing her closer to him till her raging eyes were barely 12 inches from his own.

"Richenda," he said, "is it because your money is in this case that you ask for it?"

"Yes," she flared back at him.

"Have you any other money upon you?"

"Only three shillings. Give me that case at once. I insist!"

"I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I must have the three shillings as well!"

She had drawn back from him, was staring at him with horrified eyes.

"Do you mean," she asked slowly, "that you are going to steal all my money? As well as the other things

you have done—you're going to steal my money, too?"

"Give me the three shillings."

The little silver meshed purse was out then, flung in his very face. The sharp catch scored across his cheek, bringing tiny beads of blood welling to the surface. Then the thing tinkled to the floor at his feet and Richenda, standing ashen and tense a few yards away, felt surging through her a sudden wave of sheer animal rage.

She hated this man—hated him!

He opened the purse, ran his eye across the coins inside.

"There are no more," she taunted. "You've taken every penny I possess in the world—bank books—everything! You—you——" but even the condemning noun would not come.

"Of course, I've taken them," he broke in quietly. "Do you think I'd take the trouble to chase you half way across the country at midnight and bring you back here, only to have you cutting off again at the earliest opportunity?"

"I shall still do that."

"You wouldn't get far, little one," he smiled. "There is nothing like lack of money for putting an end to adventurous ambitions. You'll find that even the natives won't do a thing to aid you without being assured of much baksheesh for their labors.

"There are Europeans!"

"Find me the fool who would shelter a wife from her lawful, law-abiding husband," he laughed back. "As for your money, I don't want it! Some day you shall have the case back again, still locked, untouched."

She wrinkled her lips in sneering unbelief. She felt impelled to hurt this man in any way that she could hurt him. He had made her feel so small, so impotent, but still, with her little square chin held high, she could show her disdain of him.

"Some day," he repeated quietly, "you shall have this case back again, still locked, untouched."

He called the native boy into the tent then, and Richenda stood by and watched her suitcase and the scanty furniture being whisked away and, a short while later, she was seated in the bullock cart trundling across the pathless hillside.

Fairways had said no word to en-

lighten her upon his plans. She did not know where they were going. Such was her pride that she would not ask. So, hour by hour, they rattled on behind the panting mules.

It was near midday when they stopped at a railway siding for a hurried meal and caught a passing train which bore them still farther into the wilds. Later came a slower journey in native oxcarts, then, at last, just as the afternoon sun was preparing to leave them, a halt.

All the day since their battle in the morning, Fairways had addressed only the most necessary words to Richenda

SHE WATCHED HIM AS HE MOVED IN THAT SLOW, SENTRY-LIKE STRIDE.

and many of these she had accepted, tendering no answer in return.

"Please do not unpack more than you consider necessary," he told her, "tomorrow we move again."

The boys had erected her tent now. She turned into it without a word.

For a long time she sat fully dressed upon her camp bedstead, pondering upon the position in which she found herself. She had not even so much as a postage stamp with which to send a letter home to her bank to call further financial aid to her. And, even had she the stamp, she could not get the letter posted without some difficulty. Assuming this obstacle past, what address could she give to which the reply might be sent? She didn't even know where she was! This country, so much wilder than where they had last camped, seemed very sparsely populated. For miles along the road they had not passed a single sign of European habitation. If any letters were directed to her, how would she get them? She simply did not know.

The situation piqued her. She turned it over and over in her mind, but no satisfactory answers came to her mental questioning. At last, in nervous irritation, she went across to the door of the tent, pushed open the flap and stood gazing out into the purple shadowed night of Africa.

A movement near at hand brought her eyes in a fresh direction. Walking across the soft turf a few yards away was Fairways, his head bent in thought, his best loved pipe clenched between his teeth. She watched him as he moved in that slow, measured, sentry-like stride, then suddenly he saw her.

"I hope you are not planning anything ridiculous," he called. "You see, this is rather a dangerous part of the country. You wouldn't be safe for 10 minutes out there——" his hand swept vaguely into the moonlight. "There are—natives—wild beasts——"

"I think I prefer God's wild beasts to the devil's civilized ones!" she retorted.

Came another morning of dawn movement, another hasty packing,

more hours of journeying in the bone-shaking oxcarts.

Richenda had given up racking her brain now. She did not mind very much where they were going. Body and spirit both were weary. She longed for the time to come when Fairways would decide to pitch camp and remain for an appreciable time in one spot again. She wanted to sleep and sleep and sleep.

The country had grown still wilder. Here it was very closely wooded and slashed with mighty mountain chains. The natives, too, had changed. They were more shy. Often they fled from the path of the Europeans and peeped at them with bright eyes from behind protective clumps of bushes. Occasionally, bands of painted, befeathered men with bows and arrows or rudely fashioned spears careered across the road. Once a cavalcade of 50 or 60 such specimens streaked by, uttering ear-piercing yells. Richenda viewed them wide-eyed. She wondered suddenly if these were head hunters. She

had heard tales of New Guinea and she supposed that tropical Africa must be much the same.

(Continued Tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXII.

Strange Days.

FAIRWAYS guessed something of what was passing in her mind and smiled to himself. He knew that the Wakamba belonged to the mildest races in Africa in spite of their fearsome aspect, but he said nothing to enlighten Richenda on this point. It would, he reflected, suit his purpose

SUDDENLY THE NOISE OF TWO REPORTS WITH BARELY A SECOND'S PAUSE BETWEEN THEM RANG OUT ACROSS THE SILENT COUNTRY.

better if she imagined the neighborhood in which he intended to camp far more dangerous than it really was.

Meanwhile, both had reached a point when they felt that the less speech there was between them the better. So, as the miles crawled by, they sat in silence. But one thought hammered ceaselessly through Richenda's brain. This man who had bent her will before his own—who had carried her off as primitive man might carry off his slave woman, who had so outrageously deceived her, had wooed and won her—keeping her deliberately in constant touch with the woman who had formerly been his—secretly insulting her by that very contact—this man who had taken her belongings for his own, even counted the money in her purse, this man of no doubt a score of evil intrigues in the years behind him—who once possessed a wife of whom he had not troubled to tell her, this man who, in the years still to come, would embark on still further intrigues after he had tired of her, who had taken her trust, her faith and broken both into shattered pieces, who then had laughed in her face. . . .

This man—she hated him! Some day, somehow, she would get away from him!

The camping site that Fairways chose in the late afternoon of the second day lay in a small hollow in the heart of an irregular clump of hills which blocked out any extensive view there might have been. The place was very wild, very lonely. Immediately they halted he had Richenda's tent erected.

"Make yourself quite comfortable," he directed. "We shall be remaining here for some time."

The days that came after were very strange to Richenda. At first Fairways kept very close in camp and spent long hours reading at the door of his tent or lying on his back on the short grass, pipe between teeth, gazing from under close drawn brows up to the crude hard blue of the African sky. Always he was polite to her, never forced word or presence upon her. But the abyss between them remained as wide as ever.

Their meals, with the exception of early breakfast, they took together. Strangely, Richenda was glad of this. She hated that curiosity which, she sensed, lay in the mind of their three servants who, with but little to do, seemed to her sensitive nerves to be watching every action of herself and

Fairways, and her pride rebelled at the thought that these untutored savages might guess something of her captive state.

Curious half hours those meals were. Scattered sentences of polite conversation ran here and there through them, but in no way did the minds of these two so oddly situated in the wilderness come closer together.

Once he organized a shooting expedition still further into the wilds, and this Richenda found herself expected to join since Fairways had no intention of leaving her behind in the camp.

"I'm sorry," he told her, "but that is really impossible. You see, I shall want Macheria and Jeroge to bring back the heads and skins, to carry the guns and for half a dozen other things, and I should not care to leave you here with only the toto for company."

"Please do not consider me," she answered with the coldness which now was always in voice and eyes. "I no doubt shall be quite safe."

"We are starting in an hour's time. Kindly be quite ready." He ignored her half protest and walked away.

Richenda dug a white tooth angrily into the redness of her lower lip, but anxious not to imperil her dignity by useless argument she awaited him, fully equipped, at the appointed time.

In spite of everything she enjoyed the expedition, which made a pleasant break in days that had grown rather wearisome, and Fairways unbent to the extent of pointing out much that was of interest to her.

During the stay in camp before their marriage he had made of Richenda as skillful a shot as those short weeks had permitted, and with the rifle he now proffered her she brought down a gazelle which offered an easy mark, shot at another which skipped agilely into the bush, flickering its white rabbit-like tail gayly as it went. One or two other times she aimed at various small game, but missed her mark, then, smiling rue-

fully, slung the gun again across her shoulders.

They were tramping through coarse, man-high grass now, not able to see more than a few yards before them. Suddenly the foremost boy halted, then turned with a finger to his lips to warn them into silence and muttered a whispered word.

Fairways frowned, puzzled.

"Go carefully," he told her. "I don't know what the boy is trying to tell us. There's something ahead, but I can't get the English name for it. Water buck, perhaps."

They moved on with quiet steps till they saw through the grass a round, short tufted clearing in front of them.

Then Jeroge stood quite motionless and drew their attention to where, not 60 yards to the right, large, black, shadowlike patches moved slowly in the shade of a clump of stunted trees.

"Good egg!" Fairways' whisper was barely audible. "It's buffalo!"

He raised his rifle to his shoulder, taking slow and careful aim.

So far none of the herd had scented the nearness of the danger which threatened them. The presence of the humans had passed unseen by the old bull sentry which stood "nose up-wind" ready to give a quick snort of warning if occasion for flight arose.

Richenda's eyes, wide with excitement, were fixed on the odd dozen unwieldy blue-black forms that moved so leisurely about the tree-shadowed turf. Buffalo! What mighty brutes they were! Some one had told her that hunters might search for weeks even in this game-infested country without seeing one. And now—so big—so near—so quiet! Such a chance to show what she could do! The spirit of the chase danced anew in her blood. If—If—suppose she—Oh, why not?

Suddenly the noise of two reports, with barely a second's pause between them, rang out across the silent country.

"Good heavens!" Fairways' steel blue eyes flashed sideways at her.

then back, without an instant pause, to the galloping upheaval in front. But three more words had burst upon her excited ears, making them tingle ruby with the insult: "You fool—you little fool!"

The blue-gray shadows had broken into a wild riot and were racing in a dozen different directions. The great bull at which Fairways had taken such careful aim, startled at Richenda's shot, which rang out the second before the man's shot reached him, had taken a swift leap, catching that bullet some 12 inches away from the vital spot at which it had been aimed.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXIII.

Danger.

WITH a snort of mingled rage and pain, the animal had streaked blindly in a half circle, suddenly disappearing, less than a hundred yards away, into the cover of high grass.

Richenda had seen her own beast

"FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, RUN, WOMAN!"

give a spasmodic leap as her bullet reached him, but now the deserted clearing brought home to her with a sense of disappointment the fact that she had not accomplished a kill.

"What on earth possessed you to do that?" Fairways' eyes were like cold steel and his lips were drawn tight.

Her little square chin went high at his tone. "Why shouldn't I try my hand?" she answered lightly. "Is it necessary to ask your permission for everything I do?"

"You little fool. Didn't you know?"

"Know what?"

"That a wounded buffalo is the most dangerous thing in Africa!" There was amazed scorn in his voice.

"As it happens, I didn't," she replied, "but, anyway, it doesn't matter now. He's gone."

"Gone! That is evident enough," he blazed, "but the point I want to get at is just where has he gone?" The sneer in his angry tone infuriated the girl.

"How should I know?" she flashed back. "I didn't watch him!"

Richenda, still an infant in the lore of the hunter, had never heard that, of all the animals on the African wilds, the buffalo is the one of whom its would-be slayer must be most

aware. Pain brings a murderous rage to the beast—rage which is mixed with devilish cunning and a resolve to entrap the one who has dealt out this sudden agony.

So it frequently happens that a wounded buffalo will deliberately double back upon its tracks, making a detour till it comes to the path along which, some strange sense tells it, the hunter must approach. There it will sink into ambush, awaiting the arrival of its enemy. Then will come the lightning rush, and quick of shot must be he who would escape the sweeping horns above those murder-glinting eyes, the trample of huge, maddened hoofs across his prostrate body! And Fairways, who had shot buffalo in Africa five years before, knew all these things.

Mixed with the annoying realization that Richenda's hurried shot from so close behind him had spoiled his own aim—and Fairways, proud of his skill with the gun, hated to let an animal get away—came also the sudden knowledge that, somewhere in the silence around him, two pairs of murderous eyes might be watching the opportune moment for that sudden rush. Suppose they both came at once! What could he do? And this girl beside him—helpless! Was ever

mortal man in such a position before?

"How should I know?" her light answer had come. "I didn't watch him. Anyway . . . he has gone!"

He wanted to shake her then for the laugh in her tone. His love of her seemed for a moment lost in the great responsibility which faced him.

"Let's go back to camp," she was saying now. "It's time enough and——"

"For pity's sake, be quiet!" Never had she heard quite that tone from him before, and then the biting words again. "You little fool!"

Richenda drew her lips into a tight line and fell into a silent stride by his side as they turned to retrace their steps. She stole a glance at the black-browed face so near her. His eyes peered into every bush as they approached it. The two boys under his command were scanning the path with frightened glances to front and rear.

Richenda began to feel a little awed. But, after all, the things had run away. It wasn't as if they had shown any signs of charging. And everything was quiet. Tiptoeing along like this, it seemed rather silly! She didn't believe that——

It was then that the thing happened. Came, from some hidden ambush a score of yards away, with the speed of a railway train, a snorting bulk of black, raging hate. Then two simultaneous yells as the Kikuyu boys tore to cover.

"Back! Back! Run!" Fairways' voice was hoarse as his gun swung up to his shoulder.

She couldn't run! Her feet seemed glued to the ground with the sudden teror of it. The thing was almost upon them now. Two quick reports and it swung aside, blind from the rush of blood that poured across its hate-maddened eyes. Then, in a flash, round again. . . .

"For heaven's sake, run, woman!" The master tone brought back her scattered senses, brought life to her limbs again. She sped wildly away.

from the battle, urged by sheer animal fear.

Fairways, too, in one bound had cleared from the pathway of the huge fury, which yet again was almost upon them. Without a second's pause his gun rang out, and the blue-gray body, slashed with its pouring streams of red, sagged suddenly into inertness, fell with convulsive shudders to the blood-pooled earth, barely two yards from the man who stood tense, breathless, and tight-lipped, watching its dying tremors. One more merciful shot he gave it, then all was still.

Richenda had moved over to his side. There was awe in her heart at the realization that this man, level-headed and steady-handed, had saved not only his own life but hers as well. The impulse to tender him the praise and apologies he had merited came suddenly to her. For one instant she marveled at that strength of brain which matched his strength of body. "Oh——" she began, "Oh, I——"

But he caught her by the shoulder, forced her into movement again.

"Get on," he said shortly, "maybe your other friend is waiting for us in the next clump of bushes!"

But of her other friend no sign could be seen as they traversed the miles toward their temporary home. Richenda, wearied by the strain and undue exertion, could scarcely drag her feet over the last part of the journey. She had no wish to talk and, after all, this man—in spite of his skill as a hunter—was but a boor, she told herself. Had he not forced her, against her will, to accompany him on this expedition which had proved so perilous.

When they reached the camp she almost stumbled into her tent.

"I don't want anything to eat," she told the boy.

"Jeroge shall bring your meal to you," Fairways answered.

Next morning, in spite of her fatigue, Richenda awoke betimes, dressed herself, and came out into the

early morning sunshine. Fairways she found already astir.

"I'm complying with your wishes and leaving you alone in the camp today," he told her, adding quickly: "with Jeroge and Macheria, that is . . .

She eyed him silently.

"I'm taking the toto with me to track down that other wounded brute."

"But is that really necessary?"

(Continued Tomorrow)

INSTALLMENT XXXIV.

Visitors.

SOMEHOW Richenda did not like the idea of Brett's going again into that same danger which they had faced the day before.

"Of course, it is necessary." His tone was short. "One can't have a thing like that ready to rush on every unsuspecting native that crosses its

path. Surely your common sense could tell you that!"

So he had not yet forgiven her that unthinking shot which had spoilt his own aim!

"Don't you think you had better take the older boys with you?" she ventured. "It would perhaps——"

"I'm leaving them to look after you." His tone was final.

"But—but—it might be wiser for you to have them with you. I—I—could come as well if——"

"Thank you. I shall, no doubt, have quite enough to do without having you on my hands as well," he answered brusquely. "I need your word that you will not move from the camp till I return, that's all. You see, it wouldn't look well to have to tell the natives to follow your every movement and——"

"Oh, you are intolerable!" she burst in.

"Quite possibly," he returned. "Have I your word or must I remain here to let the results of your unthinking action bring a few murders in its train as well? Have I your word?"

She nodded her head in silent affirmation.

The day passed quickly. Richenda spent most of it in the seclusion of her tent. From nearby came the clacking voices of Jeroge and Macheria, the former, who, being a member of various mission schools, was tending toward an attack of mental indigestion by the rapidity with which he was learning to assimilate Christianity and education in overlarge doses. Already, having taken unto himself the realization that "all men are brothers," he had begun to include socialistic doctrines of his own with regard to these white brethren whom, in his happier primitive state, he had looked upon as the superior race. Consequently Fairways' cigarettes and whisky were, though so far he had failed to notice it, beginning

to disappear at an alarming rate.

Jeroge was chanting strangely from a shattered primer now while Macheria by his side laboriously sewed red, blue and yellow glass beads in a carefully arranged pattern on a piece of bark cloth. As the sun grew stronger the chattered vernacular died away into silence, primer and bead embroidery slipped to the ground beside two recumbent forms whose bosoms rose and fell in comfortable slumber.

"I'VE COME NEITHER TO BEG, BORROW NOR STEAL."

But Richenda did not indulge in her usual midday siesta. The warm-breezed air was heavy with the sleepy hum of insect life. A sapphire-winged butterfly, barred in jade shadows, flickered across her open doorway, then came a black fat-bodied bee droning about her ears and, across her sleeve, a vivid praying mantis made his supplication as he halted every now and then and brought himself upright on his hind legs.

No, she could not sleep. It was a most disturbing afternoon. She hoped he'd got that buffalo by now. After

all, she admitted to herself, the affair had been entirely her fault. She should have known better. Not that, for all the gold in the world, she would ever admit this to Fairways. He was quite ready enough to condemn her as things were. She would not deliberately confess herself in the wrong. Nevertheless, even the best of hunters made slips. Suppose . . . suppose his slip came today. . . . She went suddenly cold as the thought came. That would be horrible, because

—well, because, she told herself, she would naturally feel that the thing was, in a sense, her fault. Yes, of course, that was what made her feel so shivery. She hoped he'd come back soon in order that she might rid herself of this feeling of responsibility. She picked up a book, frowned down at the print that danced hazily to her eyes.

"Hodi"—the welcoming hail came suddenly to her through the quietness. She sprang to her feet in wonderment. Who on earth could it be? Not Fairways. This was some deep-voiced European sending the usual vernacular

summons to announce his presence to the inmates of the camp.

The suddenly awakened Jeroge was by her now. "Bwana hai," he announced quite unnecessarily.

The man who came to meet her as she moved into the open smiled with cheerful friendliness. Tall, young, blue-eyed, fair of hair and skin, typically English in voice and manner, Richenda liked him at first sight

"Why," he exclaimed, "I believe I've disturbed your siesta! I'm so sorry. But somehow I never expected to find a lady here!"

"Well," she smiled, "you have found one. But there's a man here as well, if that consoles you, or rather—there will be very shortly when my—my husband comes home. Meanwhile I shall be glad in his absence to do anything I can for you."

"Oh," he laughed, "I've come neither to beg, borrow nor steal. To be perfectly frank, I just walked over to see what you were like."

She stared at him.

"You see," he went on, "my pal and I pitched our camp this morning on the other side of that clump of trees over there"—he indicated a spot about a quarter of a mile away. "We'd no idea then that we had neighbors. But, nosing round this afternoon, I suddenly spotted your tents, so I just blew along without further delay.

"Name: Reginald Anders. Profession: Literature and art, with aspirations toward the more solid calling of coffee farmer in company with my traveling companion, one Terence Holdingworth, as soon as we can find a place big enough to hold our ambitions and small enough to be procurable by means of the contents of our lean-sided purses. Now, in the words of Uncle Sam: 'I'm very pleased to have you know me!' It'll be 'us' soon, for, if I mistake not, the worthy Holdingworth is close upon my heels!" He came to a breathless halt, the friendly smile still beaming upon her.

"Why, I'm pleased, too!" she cried. "It is nice of you to call so soon. Macheria"—she called to the staring boy—"bring chairs for the bwanas."

Holdingworth reached them five minutes later. An older, comfortably rotund man this, more restrained than

the voluble youth who had preceded him.

Richenda marshaled her unexpected guests to the three chairs which the native boy had set under the shade of a nearby tree on the spot where most of the meals of the encampment were taken. Here, a little later, appeared a well laden tea tray later, appeared daintily presided. Then across the blue haze of their cigarettes the three chatted comfortably.

To Richenda this unexpected visit made a charming change in the weary days which had been hers recently. These men brought a breath of the outside world to her. She could throw the restraining shackles from her tongue and talk freely again. Her eyes danced with the pleasure of it, her cheeks grew pink, and again and again her lilting laugh rang out at some quaint quip from Anders, who had a ready wit.

Presently the drone of Jeroge came across from the leaf-walled shelter outside of which he was laboriously washing a couple of Fairways' shirts in a discarded kerosene tin.

(Continued Tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXV.

A Welcome Invitation.

HOLDINGWORTH'S nose wrinkled wryly. "You prefer the Christianized savage to the elemental heathen as servant, Mrs. Fairways?"

"I'm afraid I didn't engage them, but don't you think one should encourage advancement in a new country?" she asked.

"Oh, we all begin like that: Ideals—and all that sort of thing, you know, and the boys are quick to take advantage of any education by which they

may learn ways of 'doing down' the white man whenever they get a chance. Unfortunately, it is almost without exception the 'mission' boy who first begins to borrow your socks for his afternoon outings and becomes most adept at stealing your cherished cigars!"

"We went through it all in our first few weeks of camping," said Anders "We prefer the ututored heathen now, and we keep him in his place, talk his own language to him."

"But does the language matter

RICHENDA GIGGLED DELIGHTEDLY.

much?" Richenda asked.

"Matter! Great Scott, the minute you begin to let a native servant speak English to you, you've let him take the first step across that line which leads to the familiarity which breeds contempt! Of course, it is a frightful bore to have to swot up their appalling lingo!"

"I'm not a success at that!" laughed Richenda. "I can never remember the difference between viati and viasi. I know one means 'potatoes' and the other means 'boots,' but half the time I'm pretty sure I'm telling the boy he hasn't put enough polish on my potatoes and he has undercooked the boots, or something like that!"

"When I first went to India," said Anders, reminiscently, "I had a funny experience in my tussle with Hindustani. I——"

"This is the one he always begins with as preface to his travels in the Orient, Mrs. Fairways! Do you mind if I——" Holdingworth yawned behind a polite hand.

"That's the worst of Holdingworth," grumbled his friend. "No talent as a raconteur himself, no sense of humor, no——"

"Peace, brothers, peace!" she laughed. "Get on and tell me what happened."

"Well," he brightened again. "I was putting up at one of those six-floor-high Bombay hotels, and my personal boy had gone off sick—plague, smallpox or something—one of the scores of things we don't bother much about 'out East,' but which get a column in every London paper if an

old case crops up in England! Anyhow, for a while I had to do my own valeting."

"Do you good," broke in Holdingworth. "Mrs. Fairways, if you could see this lazy young cub calling a couple of boys every morning—one to lace up each boot——"

"One day I accidentally knocked my tennis shoes into the bath," went on Anders, sublimely disregarding the remarks from his friend. "I nipped up to the flat roof of the hotel and laid them on the parapet to dry, meaning to retrieve them an hour later.

"Two mornings afterward I remembered that they must still be there. I went up and, of course, considering

the number of natives about the place, found that the shoes were a minus quantity. In a bit of a rage I rang for the room boy. He was a very raw Hindu, and I explained in careful Hindustani: 'I took my shoes up to the roof of the hotel and put them on the ledge, and I think they must have fallen over. Go down and find them.'

"The boy turned with one scared look and ran like a hare. After a few minutes he reappeared with much excited gesture and chattering and vigorous shaking of his head.

"I repeated my words. A cackle of laughter came suddenly from a room on the opposite side of the corridor, and a soprano voice cried out: 'What are you trying to tell that poor man?' I detailed my desire to the unseen lady. 'Well,' said she, 'it is jooti for "shoes" and moochi for "shoemaker," and you are declaring that you took the shoemaker up to the roof and pushed him over, and the boy is to go down and bring you the remains.' "

Richenda giggled delightedly. She was sitting forward now, slim hands clasped around her knees, her short waving hair stirring gently around her face in the quiet breeze, her cheeks flushed with the pleasure this light chatter brought her.

Anders, realizing that his efforts at entertaining were meeting with success, already was deep in another anecdote, the while his gay eyes took in the youthful loveliness of his appreciative listener.

So Fairways, approaching from behind, unnoticed, found them, heard Richenda's laugh ring out for the first time since the morning of their wedding, heard her voice raised in gay chatter, paused for a moment in frowning amazement, then strode forward to the happy group.

As she rose to meet him Anders noticed that the smile died from her lips, that her eyes went suddenly cold.

Fairways looked worn and tired, his face was stained with heat grime, his clothes torn in more than one

place, where his steps had taken him through thorn-bushed country.

Richenda introduced her visitors with a word of explanation, and he gave them welcome with a somewhat set face as he sank into a proffered chair.

"Heavens!" he said. "It's been awful today! We had the devil's own time tracking that brute!"

"You got him?" said Richenda.

"Got him? Of course I did," he answered.

She bit her lip. There was that in his tone which warned her that Fairways had no sympathy for failure, did not understand it. If he meant to do a thing, he did it; that was all there was in it for him! What he meant to get—he obtained. . . . The buffalo—herself! She smiled a little wryly. What a funny combination it was! Herself—the buffalo. He wanted them. He got them—that was all!

The little party was no longer gay now. A sudden awkwardness had fallen upon it with the arrival of their host, who made but small attempts toward offering or accepting entertainment. Presently the other two men rose to take their leave.

"If you would bring Mrs. Fairways over and lunch with us. . . ." Holdingworth began. "Shall we say tomorrow? . . ."

"Thanks, awfully," Fairways' reply came a shade too quickly, "but you

see, we may be moving off any day now and——"

It was Anders who broke in then; "Oh, but you mustn't do that! We can't let you rush Mrs. Fairways off yet!" He turned to Richenda. "You'd surely take pity on two desolate bachelors and come and cheer a lone hour for them, won't you?"

"I'd love it," she returned. "You see, I do not find life in camp so very interesting——"

"I should think not," Anders reflected, silently, "with a hulking, big,

dour husband like that. Poor, pretty little thing!"

"So," she went on, "I shall be delighted if you can persuade my—my husband—" she could never get the word out smoothly—"to bring me over!" The laugh which came with her words covered any wondering impression they might have given to the two men.

They left the camp with Fairways' rather grudging acceptance that he and Richenda would lunch with them on the following day.

"A big, sulky devil of a fellow!" young Anders' thought came into concrete word as the two tramped down the hill. "I shouldn't be surprised to learn that he beats her!"

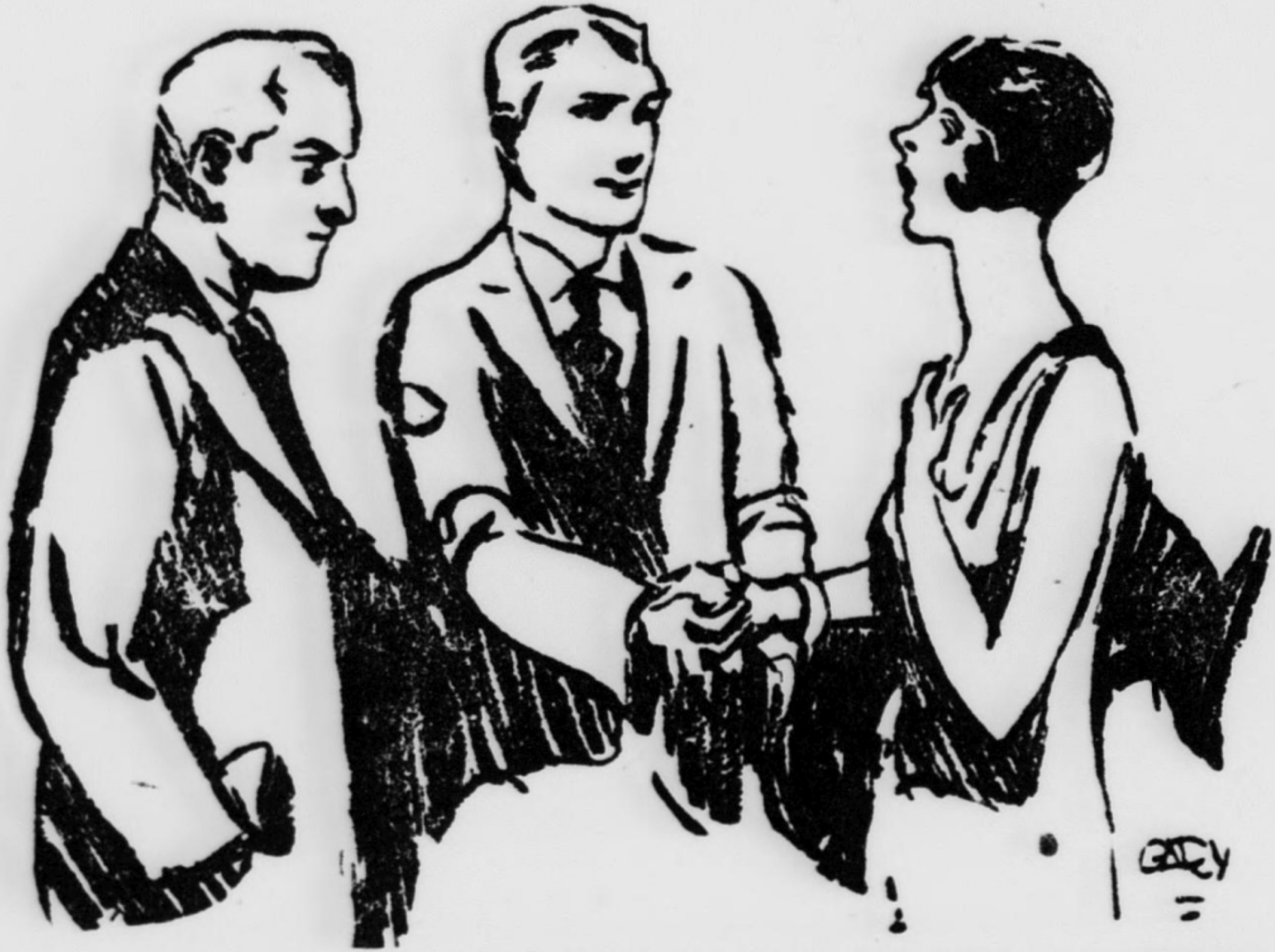
(Continued Tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXVI.

The Party.

HOLDINGWORTH agreed. "I must admit she didn't exactly cheer up at his arrival! Nevertheless, my lad, don't let that impressionable heart of yours dwell too much upon the pretty lady's troubles. Take my advice and ca' canny!"

"Heavens," flared Anders, "you haven't the soul of a barnacle! A lone-



HOLDINGWORTH WATCHED AND FROWNED A LITTLE.

ly woman—in distress, at least, that's my opinion——"

"Your hope," broke in the other, dryly. "Anders, you know perfectly well that if she'd a crooked nose or a 90-inch waist, you'd be away over the skyline without a backward glance at her!"

The boy laughed ruefully. "I suppose that is true enough," he answered. "Nevertheless . . ."

Back in the camp they had left a little sparring match was going on.

"How long have those two men been sitting here?" Fairways had asked her. Richenda tossed her head.

"Oh, not more than a couple of hours!"

"A couple of hours!"

"Such a charming afternoon! Such a change and such delightful men." Yes, she would pique him if she could. "Dear me, I'm afraid I was almost beginning to lose the use of my tongue!"

"You could talk to me."

"Ah, my friend, but it happens that I find no particular delight in talking to you—now."

She had brought him to his feet with that. Triumph mixed with something like cruelty drove her still further:

"You see, I detest the sound of your voice almost as much as I dislike the sight of your face."

She was a yard away then, walking over the turf to the door of her tent, vanishing inside lest by a quick retort he should wrest her cheap triumph from her, sitting on the edge of her bed flushed with the sudden battle.

Fairways, a tooth bitten deep in his lower lip till the beads of blood stood out upon it, had said no word. But the fingers of his sinewy hands had clenched deep into his palms until the knuckles showed chalk white above them.

As they sat at dinner that night in the little leaf-covered shelter that served them as a veranda not one word passed between them.

All the following morning she wondered if he would keep the engagement they had made with their neighbors across the valley. She was rather pleasantly surprised when his voice came outside her tent an hour before midday:

"If you are ready," he said, "we will start."

She paced silently beside him down the hill.

The impressionable Anders, whose night dreams had been haunted by a pair of dark eyes set in an alluringly tanned face (allowances must be made with regard to the fact that Richenda was the only woman in his immediate neighborhood), found her still more attractive in the fresh primrose colored frock, down the front of which swayed a string of jade beads. The faint perfume from her softly shining hair brought a queer sudden intoxication across his senses, an unveiled admiration into his wide, blue eyes.

Holdingworth, watching them, frowned a little, hoped silently that the young ass would not make a fool of himself.

The camp of the two men lay in a fertile, thickly wooded hollow, beyond which was an area of dense forest.

The meal, with its inevitable camping menu of native-bred chicken, native-grown mealies and various odds and ends from newly opened tins, was cheery. Fairways took his share in the conversation and made himself distinctly more companionable than he had done the previous evening. To Richenda he addressed exactly enough direct remarks to prevent their hosts realizing that between these two a wide

abyss yawned. On her part, however, she took but few pains to hide facts. She would not shield this man who had placed her in such a helpless position. Let the onlookers think just what they liked, she did not care, she told herself. She followed the lead she saw in Anders' eyes, her smile meeting his, her quick retorts capping his every remark.

After the meal was finished they drew their chairs further into the shade of the forest and conversation grew a little slower as the drowsy hum of afternoon fell across the heat-hazed countryside.

A chattering from the leafy heights above drew silence upon their lips. Came the peering of bright eyes from comical, wrinkled, bearded faces, the swing leaps of spider-limbed bodies,

the shrill shriek of a grotesque baby astride its mother's back, clutching her hairy neck frantically in its efforts to remain on its precarious seat, and the troop of monkeys halted in an uncertain, much conversing group within a few yards of the three humans.

"What pretty creatures!" whispered Richenda to Anders. "I'd love to have one for a pet.

"I think we can manage that," he said, rising quietly from his seat. "At any rate, we'll do our best."

At his movement the troop scampered back a few yards with a simian exclamation of alarm. Anders, taking advantage of the sudden confusion, made his way to the tent, reappearing a few moments later with a bunch of bananas and an empty narrow-necked pickle bottle in his hands.

"Now," he said, "watch your Uncle Reginald and he'll show you how they do things in South India."

The monkeys, greedy eyed, had drawn nearer in an excited group at the sight of the coveted golden fruit. Anders placed half a thick banana inside the bottle and, nearer the mouth, some small pieces. To the neck he tied a long string. Then carefully he placed the trap at the foot of the trees which held the gesticulating tribe.

Came a clamor of monkey talk, tentative dashes of approach from the bolder spirits toward the coveted food so near at hand, shrill yells of warning from more timid animals in the topmost branches. At length a leader of his fellows stole near enough to snatch a morsel from the mouth of the bottle, scuttering immediately back to his leafy ambush with the delicacy pouched in a bulging cheek. Another and another emulated his advantage till at last only the largest portion was left inside the bottle, and gingerly inserting his hand, one small, trembling creature closed his greedy fingers round this piece.

Upon him descended Anders with the blanket that a waiting native held out to him.

The three other spectators watched to see the monkey fly, but the chattering creature, wild with terror, remained with its hand fixed in the bottle till both were prisoned in the enveloping folds of the blanket.

Anders came back to them then.

"Mrs. Fairways," he smiled, "your pet makes obeisance to his mistress."

"He seems to do it very blasphemously," she laughed as the little face peeped from a gap in the blanket and with much contortion engaged itself, apparently, in telling the world exactly what it thought about the company before it.

"Why didn't the little idiot let go the banana and take its hand out of the bottle?" said Fairways.

Anders explained that it is unusual for a monkey to give up any food it once gets its fingers upon, and this habit, mingled with terror, had caused the creature to tighten its hold on the banana.

(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXVII.

Anders handed the heaving bundle to the grinning native, who bore it away for the battle that was to come before he should succeed in fastening a cord around its middle and persuading it to withdraw its hand from the bottle.

"And what will you call him?" asked Anders as the prisoned pet, now free of his blanket, returned to their sight.

"It's quite correct to name the hospital cot after its donor," cried Holdingworth hilariously. "Why not the monkey after its presentor? Call it Reginald, Mrs. Fairways."

"What an insult," she cried.

"I should take it as a compliment," said Anders softly, "if Mrs. Fairways should give my name to anything she possessed."

"Reginald, new friend, I find you very charming," said Richenda—to the monkey.

And Fairways suddenly discovered a new Richenda who could, if the spirit moved her, indulge in subtle flirtation.

Obviously, in the week that came after, the spirit did move her toward this form of recreation. Anders, who had never been known to need encouragement from a pretty woman, received quite an amount of it from Richenda.

Even in the privacy of her own mind she would not face a definite reason why she should behave in this manner. Was it that she wanted to incense Brett Fairways, to shake him out of this silent brooding which had grown closer than ever upon him lately? Was it that she wanted to show him how little he counted in her scheme of things nowadays? Or was it just a new game played to ease the monotony of camp life in the wilds? She simply didn't know. She only knew that, in some odd way, it pleased her to see Fairways silently watching her while she teased young Anders with laughing lips and eyes that caught and held his own.

And Anders, hot-headed with the impulse of sheer youth, paid frequent visits to the camp that held Richenda. "A book that Mrs. Fairways wanted to read," or "a butterfly—rather a rare one—that he thought she'd like

to see," or "some new papers from home." Many were the excuses he made for his appearances and Richenda kept him a little longer by her side on each occasion.

But Fairways always lost but few minutes in making a third to their conversation.

Nevertheless, in the blue eyes of Anders Richenda gradually realized there lay the knowledge that she was not happy. This very realization drew her closer to the fair-headed young Englishman.

To shut up the thoughts inside her as she had to do, allowing them no expression, was hard for the girl. Times were she longed for the understanding sympathy of the spoken word.

It was toward the end of the second week of the new friendship that chance set Richenda free of surveillance for a short time. Fairways arose one morning with curiously trembling hands and icy chills running down his spine.

"That fever again," he told her angrily, as a cup suddenly clattered from his shaking fingers to spread a brown stain over the white cloth of the breakfast table.

She eyed him placidly, noted the yellowish gray shade of his face. She knew that the malaria, from which he had suffered years before in Africa, sometimes still took him in its grasp, and that this attack would mean a day in the seclusion of his tent, with aspirin to break the fever and quinine to prevent immediate recurrence. He would probably be quite recovered by the following day—a little weak, perhaps, that would be all. Before their wedding he had been laid low by the same indisposition.

Richenda suddenly felt a wicked sense of gladness that there still existed something which could master this man even though it were only these slight returns of malaria.

"You'd better go to bed," she said cooly, and helped herself to a piece of Jeroge's nicely browned toast, ornamenting it with a carpet of marmalade. Fairways called peevishly for another cup.

The ague seized him again a few minutes later, shaking him till his teenth rattled like castanets. He arose with an angry imprecation and walked unsteadily across the grass to his own tent.

Richenda finished her breakfast leisurely. Yes, he was ill, but not very ill. At any rate, he didn't deserve that she should run after him like an anxious hen.

An hour later she relented a little. When she approached his own domain, she saw, through the open door of the tent, that Fairways was lying still, fully dressed, upon his camp bedstead. The ague had ceased now. The grayish yellow color was replaced by the crimson flush of fever. The eyes he turned upon her were very bright.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" she asked, with a cool politeness which held neither anxiety nor enthusiasm. Obviously a duty question this.

The man read it as such, answered hoarsely:

"Jeroge will do all that is necessary. I shall be all right in an hour or so. Run away and play, but take care that you don't get into mischief."

The cynical note in his voice sent her chin high in the air. She turned and left him without another word.

A little smile kinked her lips as she walked across the grass. Of course, one should not feel glad that he was "laid low" like that. And

yet, it was nice to know that for once she could do a litle bit as she liked without his watching eyes upon her, even though she knew also that her freedom would be short. Malaria attacks were always short, and there was no reason to believe that the one of today would be any more serious than others she had known him to have. She'd make the best of her unexpected freedom.

"Run away and play but don't get

into mischief." Out of sheer pique she suddenly wanted to get into mischief. Quite innocent mischief, of course. Just something that would break the monotony of her days.

It was at that moment that she saw the tall, slim figure of young Anders move leisurely up the hill toward the camp. With the smile of a naughty child, Richenda hurried to meet him. They came together some distance from the encampment.

"Why, Mrs. Fairways," the boy began, with an appreciative glance at the morning freshness of her pretty smiling face.

"Oh, Mr. Anders," she broke in, "I was so glad to see you coming, I was all alone and bored to tears. Brett's got a sore head and chased me out of his tent. Told me to run away and play. So I—ran away. And now——" She halted, slanting a mischievous pair of eyes toward him.

"Perhaps I may be permitted to play with you," he laughed.

"What shall we do?"

Young Anders' brain was quick to act. "I was bringing you this book," he said, "and after that I had thought of going to catch butterflies in the forest."

She knew he was an enthusiastic collector of those rare insects which are found in the African wildernesses. She claped her hands in childlike glee.

"Why, how delightful," she cried. "I'll come, too. I'll begin a collection of my own this very day. I hope we find one of those wonderful ghost gray creatures with the purple shadows on his wings and the emerald eyes."

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(Continued tomorrow.)

INSTALLMENT XXXVIII.

Mischief.

As Richenda was starting off with Anders he ventured, a trifle reluctantly:

"Perhaps I'd better go up and take a look at Fairways first."

"For pity's sake, leave him alone: he never wants to be fussed over when he is seedy. It just makes him madder. Jeroge can do everything that is necessary—better than you or I could do it. Come along." She had broken into a tripping run. "It's holiday time today. Take me to catch butterflies."

Anders thought suddenly that she herself looked like a beautiful butterfly which had somehow broken loose from the capitivity of the glass-topped case and was winging into the freedom of the sunshine again. A lovely tan and ruby butterfly slipped for an hour from the prisoning grasp of unloved hands—calling him to come and flutter with her across the wide countryside, pleading that he make an hour of freedom sweet.

They walked across to his own encampment to get the necessary equipment for the expedition.

Holdingworth, with a surprised uplifting of the eyebrows, approached them from somewhere behind the camp. Richenda saw inquiry in his eye.

"We are going butterfly fishing," she cried. "Brett's got a 'sair heid' and gave me 'the order of the boot,' so Mr. Anders is taking pity on my enforced grass widowhood."

It was on the tip of her tongue then to invite Holdingworth to join them, but she bit back the invitation. No—she'd go alone with Anders if she could. That, though quite harmless, might pique Fairways, and somehow, these days, she was always desirous of piquing him. There was something about her of the mischievous child who will tease the big dog till, in sheer desperation, it retaliates by a bite.

Anders, too, gave no dications to the other man; had not the remotest intention of doing so.

Holdingworth stood watching them, a puzzled frown on his brow, as they faded into the distance, then he turned on his heel with an angry mutter and strode thoughtfully toward the direction of Fairways'

camp. There were some things of which Holdingworth, engaged to a tight-lipped, tight-moraled young woman, who sojourned in a Hampshire cathedral town, did not approve.

But Richenda didn't want anybody to approve of her that day. She would rather that every one be disapproved—particularly Brett Fairways.

"Run away and play, and take care that you don't get into mischief . . . ." The remark, with its commanding note, still rankled.

Perhaps the thought that she was touching the fringe of mischief—innocent as it might be—brought that starry glint to the laughing depths of her big dark eyes, that seductive tilt to the curves of her crimson mouth, the gay repartee to her wagging little tongue.

For two hours the man and the girl strayed near the edge of the forest, at no time very far from the camps above.

The butterflies were very numerous in the sunlight-dappled coolness of the outer trees.

Great sapphire monsters buried in irregular lines of crimson fluttered about them, honey colored midgets danced round the rare flowers, others whose snowy wings were tipped with rose and jade slid like fairy ghosts about the deeper shadows.

One lovely thing, the battle of turquoise and vermilion on its great wings, came to Richenda's net.

"No, no," she cried, as Anders proceeded to make speedy arrangements for its decease. "It's too wonderful. Why should it die? I'm going to set it free!" "Good heavens, no!" he protested. "It is a new specimen. I've come across one like this before. Let me——"

But she twisted the net away from him.

"I shall let it go."

"But what's the use? In any case the lives of these things are very short. One day more or less makes

but little difference, and, you know, it is a very easy death we offer them—better than being torn wing from wing by the fingers of a mischievous monkey or beaten to death in a tempest of hail stones."

But Richenda's captive was already winging its way toward the freedom of the upper branches. They watched it flutter upward, at first uncertain of its sudden freedom, then, with a wild burst of speed, dart to the haven of the branches above. But, suddenly, a whirl of blue and green shot out upon it, the spearlike sharpness of a long yellow beak, and a moment later one crumpled wing planed down to the withered grass.

"It is like our ideals," the girl sighed. "Dazzlingly beautiful, we send them out into the sunshine, and then somebody comes and casts them, torn and battered, to the ground at our feet. Perhaps you are right, Mr. Anders, it might be better to end them altogether rather than send them out to face the dangers."

The transition from the laughing creature she had been a few moments before to this tight-lipped woman with the big, strained eyes, who stood by his side was too much for Anders. Suddenly his hands were on her own.

"Richenda, what is the matter? You are unhappy. Oh, my dear, won't you let me help you?"

The unexpectedness of his words unnerved her. For many days past she had felt the need of human understanding, had longed to talk matters over with some one who could give her an outside opinion upon the strange position in which she found herself. And yet, now that the opportunity was here, a strange reluctance held her. After all, she could scarcely discuss her husband with this man who was but a passing acquaintance.

Anders saw her indecision.

"You are not happy."

His words held definite assertion.

She made no answer.

"I knew it!" he cried triumphantly. "Richenda, Oh, dearest girl, you must let me help you. I simply can't bear to see you like this. I want to do something. Tell me all about this trouble. Tell me, and let us find the best way to put it right. What is it you want?"

His hands were still on hers, but at the question she drew her fingers free. "What is it you want?" How could she answer brusquely, "Money!" And yet that was all she wanted! Wanted the wherewithal to get away. Money! It would be useless to stir a step without it.

But she could not ask money from a man—a mere acquaintance, sprung from she knew not where. It was just one of those things which, whatever the necessity, are not done.

"Hall-oo-oo!" From somewhere beyond the hail came to them. Again, much closer: "Hall-oo-oo!"

(Continued in Tuesday's Star.)

INSTALLMENT XXXIX.
THE RENDEZVOUS.

ANDERS cursed softly under his breath: "Holdingsworth! Damn the fellow! What on earth does he want?"

"Hall-oo-oo!" Very near now. He might find them any moment since they stood on the outskirts of the forest almost within sight of the hill down which he must have come. It would look odd if they gave no reply.

"Hall-oo!" Anders sent the ringing answer back, drew Richenda into the shadow of a clump of bushes.

"Tell me quickly, Richenda. What is it? Oh, my dear, I want to help you so!"

Suddenly she realized that in a moment she would be caught back again, lips sealed, the faint chance of help gone forever. Her breath came in quick gasps. Words tumbled, against her will, from her lips in a wild rush.

"I want to get away from him . . . He holds me tight! He has no right to keep me so. I've tried to get away before—but he brought me back. I want to escape to some place where he has no power over me. If I could only get to Nairobi—there are people there—then he couldn't——"

"Hall-oo-oo . . . . ."

"Oh," she was nearly sobbing now, "what can I do . . . what can I do?"

Holdingworth's khaki-clad form came into the open space barely 50 yards away from them.

"Richenda"—Anders voice was hurried—"slip out of your tent at 12 o'clock tonight. Can you do this safely?"

"Yes—yes."

"I'll be waiting not far off: I'll whistle softly. Come to me. Then we can talk things over better. Girl, I'd sell my soul to help you—you know that."

"Your husband is a bit worried, Mrs. Fairways," Holdingworth's voice came to them. "He has mental visions of you being chewed to bits by pugnacious quadrupeds, so he asked me to bring you back."

"How is he now?" she asked dully.

"Better, but weak as a rag, of course! He was asleep when I made my morning call upon him—only woke up half an hour ago and sent me off post haste to find you, though I told him you were merely chasing moths protected by the strong arm of Anders here."

Fairways had obviously, as he informed them upon their return, "broken the back of the fever," but he looked very weak and limp as he lay in the camp chair under the shade of a nearby tree, ears buzzing with the hum of a thousand ghostly church bells—the usual result of a stiff dose of quinine.

He took but little interest in the butterflies they produced for his inspection and eyed Richenda with a frown that might have been either the outcome of annoyance or indisposition. Presently Holdingworth and Anders faded discreetly out of the picture.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" Richenda's duty question came again.

"Yes," he answered tersely, "don't go wandering off like that again, unless you want to find your cavalier bedecked with a pair of the blackest eyes in all Christendom! I'm not going to have my wife running over the countryside with every simpering puppy that cares to lift a beckoning finger!"

The day passed quietly. Fairways spent most of it with closed eyes in the chair under the tree. Richenda sat in the shade of her tent trying to read. But the words danced unheeded under her eyes. She could not still the excitement that pulsed through her. To steal out at midnight and meet a man! It was the sort of thing that once no power on earth could have persuaded her to do. But the longing to outwit Fairways was strong upon her—it brought a mischievous kinking smile to her young lips. She would meet Reginald Anders out there on the moonlit hillside. She would make him help her, would borrow money from him. Once free, her identity established, she could easily obtain from her own bank the wherewithal to repay the loan.

The path of escape began to appear quite smooth and easy. She'd teach

a man how ridiculous it was to attempt to keep her against her will!

Seven o'clock. Eight. How slowly the hours passed!

Half past nine. Fairways had been in his own tent a long time now. The boys had ceased their chatter over the nightly meal. Things had grown quiet. Ten. The hyenas began a serenade to the late-rising moon. Eleven-thirty. Slim fingers probed the flap of the tent an inch open; a pair of anxious eyes peeped out toward the night.

Twelve. That moon! She hurled mental imprecations at the white blaze of it. Every blade of grass seemed to crackle like dry sticks under her nervous feet. The very breath almost stopped in her lungs.

Powers above, that wretched jackal, yapping suddenly till she nearly died in thinking Fairways' call was at her heels!

The soft note of a night bird. Again. Over by that clump of bushes. Some one coming. In front, thank goodness, not behind! A low whisper cutting across to her: "Richenda . . . Richenda."

She didn't quite like that. After all, he shouldn't . . . and yet people used Christian names so freely these days. It meant but little, she assured herself.

The next instant she was beside him.

"Richenda, oh, Richenda," his voice thrilled softly as he took her hand and drew her into the shade of a clump of nearby trees.

"I cannot stay long," she said hurriedly. "He may be restless. If by chance he found you here I believe he would kill you. Oh, Mr. Anders, I can't explain everything, it would take too long——"

"Don't try, little one," he broke in. "You are not happy, you must go away—that is the main thing."

"Yes. Yes."

"Richenda . . . darling . . . come with me!"

She stood gazing wide-eyed at him in the moonlight, speechless for a moment.

"Richenda . . . I've wanted you from the first moment I saw you . . . loved you till, sleeping or waking, your face is always with me. I knew you cared. I saw it in your dear eyes. We wil go away. . . ."

(Copyright, 1926.)

(Continued in Thursday's Star.)

INSTALLMENT XL.
A Misunderstanding.

RICHENDA was in his arms before she had caught the full meaning of the words that rushed hotly from his lips and ceased suddenly with the coming of those fierce kisses which stung her into speech.

"No, no, no!" With a wild cry she had torn herself free, face scarlet with quick fury. "Oh, how dared you?"

It was Anders' turn to be amazed. How dared he? Hadn't she said she wanted to get away? Hadn't she agreed to steal out and meet him alone at midnight? Hadn't she, all along the line, shown a willingness to accept his company on all possible occasions, even gone off into the forest with him when Fairways lay sick with fever? There was only one construction likely to be built upon her actions by a twentieth century young man imbued with that conceit which is born of the post-war knowledge that, because his sex is in the minority, each member of it may gain additional value in the eyes of the present-day women with their unfortunate majority of the "superfluous two million!"

A dozen or more of these two million had found young Anders dangerously attractive, had done their best to render him atrociously swollen headed—and had not exactly failed.

And here was Richenda, lovely, wholly desirable, stealing out to meet him in the middle of the night and then pretending to be surprised because he kissed her!

A new thought came to him. Evidently she wanted the "masterful lover" business. That must be it.

"How dared I?" he laughed, catching her suddenly in his arms again. "Doesn't a man dare anything when he has found the one woman in the world who was made for him? Be still, little silly. I've got you tight—do you think I'll ever let you go? Richenda, darling. . . ." His lips swooped down toward her again.

This was more than the girl could bear. For the space of a few moments she fought till, with a superhuman effort, she tore herself free and turned on him with blazing eyes and lips that trembled in sheer fury, so that for fully half a minute the words would not come.

"You've got it all wrong," she cried at last. "If I want to get away from one man, that doesn't mean to say I'm ready to blunder straight into the next pair of arms held out for me!"

Young Anders' cheeks burned darkly.

"Then what——" he began.

"All I wanted to do was to ask you to lend me 30 pounds—I could have paid it back as soon as I got my own money out from England—and to put me safely on the road to the nearest railway station. I told you I wanted to get away, but I didn't for one moment want to take you with me!

"Oh, you men . . . you men——" A little sob of angry disappointment came now. "You are all the same . . . just beasts!"

She turned and left him then, fled away with scarlet cheeks, a little frightened, too, as she realized that in her anger she had forgotten to keep her tones low. And they had been so near the encampment! Suppose the fever had kept Fairways awake! Suppose . . .

She gasped with relief as she came softly into the safety of her own tent again.

In the moonlight two pairs of eyes had watched her going—one pair hurt and angry, the other bearing the hint of a satisfied smile as their owner moved quietly onward toward the spot to which he had been summoned by the sound of Richenda's first incautiously raised cry which had come on the night breeze to his wakeful ears.

"And now, Anders, that my wife has told you exactly what she thinks of you, perhaps it will be as well if I do the same!"

. . . . . .

"What on earth have you been doing to yourself?" demanded the astonished Holdingworth of Anders, whose previously attractive eyes were now decorated with the red and purple tints of a thundery sunset. (The reply came mumbled from a swollen mouth from which two teeth were newly missing.)

"Couldn't sleep last night. . . . Went for a walk. . . . Fell over one of those damn tent pegs. . . ."

"I didn't hear you," said Holdingworth in all innocence.

"Well, hear me now, and for heaven's sake shut that great mouth of yours, damn you!"

At that same moment Richenda Fairways was repeating Holding-worth's question in her own words.

"I trust you are feeling better this morning," she had begun with cool politeness. Then, as her eyes suddenly rested on a swelling, bluish lump, "But what have you done to your forehead?"

Fairways, nursing a sore arm, smiled grimly.

"Oh, that is where a mosquito tried to bite me!"

"It seems to have succeeded fairly well."

"I guess it was rather sorry before

"Richenda"—his voice grew soft—"you could easily make them so."

I had finished with it," he answered.

A little later Fairways told her that early the following morning they were going to move on again to other hunting fields. She felt his eyes upon her as he spoke, watching her from under narrowed lids.

At first a feeling of relief ran through her. This would put an end to the situation which had arisen between herself and young Anders. In the quietness of her tent she had realized that it was through her own thoughtlessness the thing had happened. If she had not felt so lonely, so in want of sympathy, the boy would

never have got a second glance from her, she knew that. Of his own feelings she had not thought. And now, wherever she might turn for help or understanding, it could never be to Reginald Anders. She had buried her face in the white coolness of her pillow and wept then.

So they were going away. She need worry her head no longer over that impulsive youth. But suddenly her very relief turned to annoyance. Fairways evidently imagined she was his

mere chattel, a thing to be carted over the countryside without a word of explanation.

"Wouldn't it be more polite," she flared, "if you asked me if I were ready to leave here?"

"In any case, it is quite time you did leave, and that is enough for me," he answered.

"Please explain your meaning." Her voice was very cold.

"Does it need explanation? You must surely realize that the situation has been as plain to Holdingworth and me as it is to that other half-baked ass and yourself! I simply do

not intend to play the part of an onlooker while my wife makes a fool of herself—and of me, too!"

Richenda, speechless with indignation, could only glare at him.

"I think," he went on, "your reasoning powers might tell you that I countenanced friendship with these strangers merely to lighten for you the hours that you have so repeatedly termed dull——"

"Are they anything else?" she broke in.

"Richenda"—his voice grew soft—"you could easily make them so."

"If I cared to fall in line with Mrs.

Davenant and my other predecessors, I suppose you mean!"

Richenda saw him wince.

(Continued in Saturday's Star.)

INSTALLMENT XLI.

By Right of Proprietorship.

Richenda spurred herself to further effort.

"But, then, you see, I don't! I never shall! Moreover, this absurd caveman, comic opera stuff that you indulge in merely makes you ridiculous in my eyes. You can't go on dragging me around the world for-

SUDDENLY HE DREW HER CLOSER.

ever—there must come an end of it some time. As for the bond between us—it is no marriage at all. I could have it annulled any day."

"I think not," Brett replied, dryly. "In the eyes of the law you would be the person in the wrong."

"You married me under false pretenses."

"Not at all. I was a free man, you a free woman. Whatever went before counts for nothing."

He rose to his feet, then held her eyes with his own.

"Don't you realize," he said slowly, "that there is at least one thing which you might put to my credit? I have not inflicted my presence unnecessarily upon you. Many men——"

"There's never any one so black that they can't find some one blacker to contrast themselves against!" she cried with heightened color.

She was frightened then. She had never seen quite that look on his face before. He came close to her, put both hands on her shoulders, holding her till she was powerless in his grip.

"Richenda," he said, "in the eyes of the law you are my wife. Don't try me—too far. It wouldn't be safe."

Their glances met then in a wordless battle, his burning deep into hers, steady, a little fierce; hers bright with outraged pride, defiant above the crimson mouth that bore a sneer to cover its trembling.

That very defiance tore something of the man's control away. Suddenly he drew her closer, tilted her chin with one fierce hand until her lips were forced up to meet his own.

She swayed as he freed her, sobbing in sheer impotent rage for the words that would scarcely come.

"You—you—you—Oh, how dared you?" The same question that she had flung at Reginald Anders had to suffice again.

Fairways had drawn a cigarette from his case and was tapping it carefully on the small table of the leafy dining room in which they stood, striking a match slowly, deliberately.

"How dared I?" He repeated her words with a cool laugh. "Oh, right of proprietorship, I suppose. At any rate, more right than Anders had!"

She gave an amazed gasp, opened her lips to speak, snapped them tight again as she saw the half mocking smile on his mouth, turned her back upon him and walked away without a single word, the anger and dislike in her heart trebly increased.

Several times during the dark hours she peeped through her doorway out into the night, withdrawing her head with a sigh. Where could she go? Not to those other men across the valley, that was out of the question. Not into the game-infested darkness of the veld, that would be suicidal. At last she crept wearily into her narrow canvas bed. Tomorrow she would work this thing out. Stop with this man whose conduct toward her bore a threat! That was something which she was determined she would not do. Somehow, some time—soon—she must get away.

A month ago! Richenda stood gazing across the African hillside wrapped in retrospection. A month ago it had been her wedding day. It seemed already years away!

She wished sudenly that she could have that sunny morning back again—to remake it, acting upon the knowledge which now was hers. What a fool she had been—a blundering, unthinking fool—wrecking her life because of a silly dream, some nightmare wrought of indigestion, no doubt, as prosaic Jean Anderson had warned her, and the chance resemblance of a smudgy photograph in a London newspaper!

Romance, sentiment, she had given them free rein; blinded herself against the danger of them; gone to meet love with greedy hands, clutched it to her till it turned to the ashes of dislike and distrust under her very fingers.

And now—she hated Brett Fairways. She told herself this a dozen times a day—hated him for that silent, narrow-eyed watch he kept upon her, for the subtle threat he had offered her—"Don't try me too far—it wouldn't be safe"—hated him for the burning kisses he had showered on her resisting lips, for his smilingly given reason, "Right of proprietor-

ship; at any rate, more than Anders had"—hated him, too, for something he had said a while later—"I'll give you another month to learn to see things at their proper value. And then——" He had broken off into silence at that, a silence more eloquent than words, had turned on his heel, leaving her alone to complete the sentence in whatever way she wished, and Richenda, standing with a patch of scarlet burning on each cheek, had felt her hate of him grow stronger than ever.

They were encamped in thickly wooded country now, and the girl, as before, had no knowledge of her whereabouts. Once she had put furtive questions regarding the position of the nearest township to Jeroge, the native boy.

"It is three hours westward, memsahib," he had told her. "Tomorrow the bwana sends me there to buy tea and flour."

Only a few miles away! That would be easy, she reflected, with money at her command to board the train once she reached it. But without money, train and township might as well be a million miles away. Her determined young lips came together in a tight line then. She would suffer the humiliating position of being this man's prisoner not one moment longer than was necessary.

"Another month—and then——." His words came back to her. Well, somehow or other, the end of that month must find her free.

Apart from the delight of escaping from her present position, it would be fun to outwit this man who spoke as if he were omnipotent. She wished she might see his face when he discovered she had gone beyond recall. She'd love to be somewhere within his sight, yet out of his reach, to send scathing words across to him—to mock at him.

During her afternoon siesta of the sixth day in camp she was roused by a clamor of excited tongues. Presently Fairway's deeper tones came, then the patter of bare feet, the sound of his heavier footsteps striding into distance, and quietness was on the camp again.

Richenda lay lazily wondering what had been the cause of this commotion, what had taken him away so sudden-

ly. Presently she slipped into her dressing gown and popped a rumpled dark head into the blazing heat outside. Already a quarter of a mile away she could see Fairways speeding toward a distant valley, some five hide-hung natives keeping pace with him, two of his own white kunzaed boys accompanying the crowd.

She wandered, suddenly, why he should have left her alone, with but one servant, giving no explanation for his departure—not even waiting for the usual acquiescence which he always extracted from her, the promise that she would not move from the camp.

(Continued in Tuesday's Star.)

"GO QUICKLY, THE BWANA WILL BE HUNGRY."

INSTALLMENT XLII.

Richenda Attempts an Escape.

FAIRWAYS was nearly a half mile away—running as fast as his feet could carry him, putting still farther distance between himself and her.

Jeroge's brown visage came before her then. The boy's eyes were wide with excitement, his tongue poured out a mixed stream of English and Swahaili from which Richenda gathered the sense of some unusual happening.

There had been a white bwana, a hunter, encamped in that distant forest and, bareiy an hour before, a rhinoceros, charging him, had ripped his side with its frontal horn till the blood gushed out in a stream that would not cease. So the tribesmen of a nearby village, knowing of Fairways' presence in the neighborhood, had sped to fetch him! to this white brother who might, ere help could reach him, be sleeping in the arms of death.

Richenda gathered that Fairways stopped only to snatch up a case of medical necessities which the camp possessed, to thrust a sun-topee on his head and, without another minute's

pause, had fled to that countryman who lay dying in the forest with only unskilled heathen to attend him.

There had been no time to spare. He had wasted none—had gone without a word, maybe without a thought upon the woman left now to her own devices in the deserted camp.

Richenda's moment had come.

She glowed with the realization of this. Then came suddenly a little sense of shame. Was it taking advantage of his absence on a merciful errand? Was it . . .? She battled the thoughts into silence. He had taken advantage of her own physical inferiority. The odds were even!

She was flinging on her garments with fingers that trembled with haste now, while a plan of campaign took form in her turmoiled brain. Then she was in Fairways' tent scanning the place with excited eyes. The case that held that most necessary of all commodities—her money—would, she

thought, be in the long black uniform box he used. She fumbled at the fastenings with fierce hands. Locked. She rattled the hinges, tears of vexed excitement standing in her eyes, then sat back on her heels panting from exertion. Suppose he had taken the keys with him! Suppose she couldn't open this thing that seemed stout enough to resist her every effort! Suppose . . . .

Then she saw that bunch of keys lying on the wicker table so close that

she had but to stretch her arm to its full length to have them as her own. A moment later the black painted lid swung back upon its hinges and her fingers were delving deep under the pile of neatly laid clothing till they felt the soft leather of her writing case.

"Some day you shall have it back—still locked, untouched," he had told her. A little laugh of triumph came from her now. She had it back—and not from his lordly offering hands. By her own wit she had attained it!

The little key that had hung from a chain on her neck was in the gilt aperture then. Inside the case, she found all as she had left it—papers and of ready money an amount large enough to last until she reached a bank from which she could draw, by means of her letter of credit, a still larger sum. She walked out of the tent hugging the little case close to her side.

Jeroge was busy preparing afternoon tea and the delicately cut sandwiches upon which he prided himself.

She forced herself to eat, then called the boy to her side.

"Jeroge," she said, "you must go to the bwana and see if he requires any help from you."

The boy hesitated. "Will memsahib come with me?" he asked.

"No, I shall stay here."

"Then I may not leave the memsahib—the bwana gave order."

Richenda frowned. So he had set a black boy on guard over her! She tingled with the insult of it. She did not known that Fairways had but flung a hurried word across his shoulders as he tore off: "Look after the memsahib, Jeroge. See that no harm comes to her!"

Gulle came to Richenda then.

"I shall be quite safe if I stay here," she said, slinging her rifle across her shoulders. "Nothing can harm me. The bwana has had no tea. Fill his vacuum flask and take it to him, Jeroge."

The boy still hesitated, twiddled an anxious toe among the withered grass, eyed her uncertainly.

"Do as I tell you!"

"But, memsahib——"

She flayed him then with angry words till he sulkily set about obeying her commands. But, though she had exacted apparent obedience, Pishenda knew but little of the workings of the cunning native mind, of the curiosity with which each action of their European employers is watched, of the conversations in the primitive huts behind the camp when the doings of the day are discussed by the servants, when the very words which have passed between the white people are repeated and every action criticized.

"Look after the memsahib, Jeroge."

It meant more than one thing to the native boy, who knew quite well that once the memsahib had been brought back to the camp at midnight: the boy who, too, had watched those periods of silence, who, not half an hour before, had, by means of a quietly applied eye to a tiny split in the side of Fairways' tent, seen Richenda force her way into that tin box which the bwana always kept locked.

Behind his guileless brown face the agile native brain was working. The memsahib wanted, for reasons of her own, to be rid of him.

Such was the power of the white race that he could not bring himself to deliberately flaunt her order. Nevertheless, he had not the slightest intention of obeying it.

As is usual to the native African, the commands of a white woman meant nothing against the commands of a white man.

Jeroge decided he would keep an eye on the memsahib.

She watched until the tea and sandwiches were packed, then dismissed him with a terse command:

"Go quickly, the bwana will be hungry."

"N'dio, memsahib," he acquiesced cheerfully, and went on his way with running leaps.

Three minutes later Richenda herself was speeding down the slope of the hill in a direction opposite to that which the boy had taken, running

westward to where, 10 miles away, there lay the place she must reach with as little delay as possible. Her speed toned down to a sharp walk at length. She had reached flatter land now; she turned to a rough track which led toward the blackness of a forest near at hand.

The place was dark with dank coolness which rose from steamy undergrowth. Here a parakeet screamed shrilly as her footsteps broke across the quiet, there some more stealthy creature rustled among a clump of coarse, high fern. For an hour she hurried along the rough track which grew narrower as she covered more of its meandering way.

A bevy of native women broke through the trees, bow-backed, shaven-headed creatures, shoulders laden with neatly tied piles of dry sticks, naked brown babies astride their hips, these dribbling infants sucking contentedly at much-chewed ends of sugar cane.

"Wapi Abmani?" asked Richenda.

(Continued in Thursday's Star)

CHAPTER XLIII.

Fear.

CAME a babel of information of which Richenda understood not one word, then the pointing of some half-dozen sub-nailed brown fingers down the path in front of her, and with a sigh of relief, she was pursuing her course again.

The way had grown more tiring now, the path narrower, more uneven. Here and there it resolved itself into sheer dank swamp through which her boots squelched in oozy slime that

rose high above the toecaps, hampering every step and reducing her to quick fatigue.

Frequently other paths across the one she followed and she would pause, wondering if it were time to turn off to the right as she had gathered from the gesturing bibis, was necessary to due course, listening in the vain hope that she might hear the cheerful lilt of native voices through the leafy solitude around. But the trees stood closer together now, the place was darker, quieter, with only the hint of sinister whisperings from things that peered at her through leafy ambushes.

Once a ray of sunshine, penetrating through a rare open space above, shot across a nearby bush and she caught the flash of glistening eyes—unblinking, greenish yellow eyes—fixed steadily upon her. A cold chill of fear came over her. She fingered the light rifle which she carried, and strode on with quicker step, throwing hasty glances across her shoulder as she went.

The crack of a twig under silent padded feet now . . . the rustle of a branch. She battled against a wild desire to run, but her short training in the lore of the wilderness brought wisdom through her terror. To show signs of undue haste would be fatal. She must walk—walk with the unfaltering steps and imbue whatever creature this was that followed her with the conviction that her heart held no fear.

She wondered just how much longer she could fight that insidious weariness which was creeping over her. A glance at her wristlet watch showed her that she had been trudging along for nearly two hours now. True, her progress had been slow, hampered by the badness of the path.

The unseen thing that had followed her had apparently given up the game now. She walked on more easily for another half hour.

At length she was forced to give in to the demands of sheer fatigue, and, sinking down on a patch of withered grass, her back planted squarely against the great trunk of a forest giant, she reviewed the position in which she found herself.

For a long time she sat there. It was not much good to move, she told herself, grimly. She should have been at Abmani by now, but neither sight nor sound of civilization was accorded her; only the interminable vista of uncountable trees, the barrier of dense roofing of green above, the riot of rank vegetation underfoot, the silences broken only by the croak of

a frog, the shrill chirp of a cricket, the shriek of some hoarse voiced biped in the thickness overhead.

She glanced at her watch. Nearly 6 o'clock. No wonder a dull gray mist was drawing around her. She sprang to her feet with a frightened gasp. Suppose she had to spend the night in this place of subdued whisperings, of sinister rustlings. Suppose . . . She was running then, in hurried steps that tripped against clumpy heaps of grass in the path, through bog that reached with sucking grip up to her ankles, till each step was dragging effort. Somewhere far away she heard a night prowling beast send its hungry call across the solitary country.

A strange noise from not far behind her made her throw a scared glance back. Something was following her again. Not stalking her quietly, half afraid, but blatantly, openly following her. Something big; a leaping grayish smudge. Fear gripped her by the throat, then unreasoning terror. With trembling fingers she poised her rifle and sent hasty shots into the half gloom behind—shots that were followed by a howling, half human wail.

Then she was off again, stumbling, tripping, her heart pounding in agonized thumps at her very throat, every nerve straining in the effort to be out of the dreadful menacing blackness that was drawing about her, blundering blindly on till every step was agony, till every breath came like a knife thrust through her pulsing body, till things swam in swirling gray mist before her sight . . . running in uncertain jerky movement, sometimes stumbling to her very knees upon the rough path till her tender flesh was scored and torn in a hundred places . . . running till at length a merciful though tardy Providence brought her suddenly to where she broke through the rim of the forest to a wide expanse of moon-bathed plain.

She stood for an instant, blinded by the shimmering silver of it, then came to her ears the welcome clack of native voices.

Tribesmen! She distrusted them with the distrust of the newcomer to tropic lands, but even the wild folks were safer than the watching, following unknown things of the forest behind; safer than the hungry beasts that must already be beginning the

nightly search for food on the plain in front. She made her way to the hive-shaped huts close at hand.

"Hodi!" Her call brought a score of wondering folk, craning heads through low apertures which served the places as doors: then, through those openings, bodies followed the heads, bodies half naked, rank with the odor of clay, oil and the smoke of the green wood fires. Men, women, children—even babies who could but toddle—one and all turned out to hold clacking converse regarding the strange, slim, white-faced visitor who paid this unusual call upon them. They eyed her amazedly, with teeth still working from their evening repast of baked mealie porridge and sweet potatoes.

"Wapi Abmani?" Richenda's question came mechanically.

Abmani, she gathered vaguely from the riot of answer that came, was still far away.

"Maji," she demanded, then: "Maji, chukula," urged by the pang of hunger and the dryness of her swollen tongue. So food and water the kindly brown people quickly brought to her—mealie porridge, tasteless and half cooked; a few coarse, overripe bananas, a gourd of goats' milk.

She was in one of the smoky dwellings now—a place hung round with a medley of strange articles and rank with the odor of sun-dried hides from recently killed victims of the native hunt.

A great weariness was upon her. Body, brain and spirit all were held in that overpowering desire for rest. And rest she must, though Fairways was but half a mile behind her—she could not move a step farther till she had rest.

A few nickel pieces from her purse sent the chattering crowd, delighted, from the tent. Somehow she had indicated her desire that she would be alone, would sleep. Hurtling after their retreating forms she sent the evil smelling drapery of the place, other things that offended her sensitive nostrils; then rifle cuddled in the crook of her arm, she stretched herself on the bare earth and fell instantly into the slumber of sheer fatigue.

(Continued in Saturday's Star.)

INSTALLMENT XLIV.

Captivity.

HOW long she slept Richenda never knew, nor could she find what had wakened her so suddenly, brought her upright in a sitting position with the strange conviction that some other living creature was about her. There had been that soft swishing noise as her eyes came open, the clattering of something in the doorway. Even as she bounded to her feet she heard it again, put out a quick hand toward where she knew her rifle would be, then, with a little indrawn breath, felt carefully slowly, over the ground about her, fingering every inch of the spot where she had slept, moving on her knees through the darkness as her hands pawed over the hardbaked earth, feeling, with worried fingers, for the rifle that she could not find—the rifle that, she realized suddently, must have been stolen from her as she slept—coaxed from her very arm.

She ran to the rough dark cloth curtain that covered the opening of the hut, pulling it aside, wriggling her body through the low aperture.

And, half way through, a firm hand came upon her shoulder, a low native voice:

"Hapana, memsahib," it said.

No? Who dared to offer her the word? She wriggled fiercely under the restraining hand, seeking to free herself, but slowly she was forced back into the darkness of the hut by sheer strength of the big muscled native who stood on midnight guard outside her door.

"Hapana, memsahib!" There was no denying the command in his tone. She was to be a prisoner! A defenseless prisoner, too, since, with stealthy cunning, they had relieved her of the rifle that had been her only means of protection!

She stood silently in the dark hut as something of her position came to her, then with stealthy movements she probed a hole in the leafy wall opposite the door and, peering out to the moonlit scene beyond, discovered another silent form guarding the rear of the place.

Obviously they meant that she should not get away.

There was no more sleep for Richenda that night. She sat on the bare earth floor, hands clasped round her ankles, knees huddled up to her chin, viewing from all angles the dilemma in which she found herself.

At times a more reassuring attitude of mind came to her. Maybe these wild people were merely guarding her against any marauder who might steal around her hut. The Kenian native, she knew, was a peaceable creature, bearing much respect in his heart for the might of the white folks who held his country. But, at the back of all her brave self-assurance, came again the realization that they

had stolen into her tent and taken her only means of self-defense—the rifle. That act she failed to explain satisfactorily. It was sheer impudence.

Dawn came at last. She was glad when the cries of the brown babies, the clatter of the cooking pots, the bleat of goats and hens, freed again from the huts they had shared through the night hours, chased the silence of night away.

She walked outside into the pink flushed morning. The natives gazed

THE VOICE BROUGHT RICHENDA TO HER FEET WITH ONE BOUND.

curiously at her as she strolled about the cluster of huts. Presently a couple of women indicated that a meal awaited her and she sat down to do her best with fare similar to that served at the primitive meal of the previous night.

Breakfast finished, she was on her feet again, approaching one muscular brave who, bedecked with a necklace of wild dogs' teeth, the tail feathers of a barndoor fowl dropping coquettishly over one ear, appeared to be a man of substance and command. To him she intimated her desire to proceed forthwith to Abmani.

"Shillingee mingee," she promised him in halting venacular. "If you guide me there without delay I will give you many shillings."

"Hapana, memsahib," he negatived her suggestion with a flash of white teeth showing through his cheerful grin.

She marched angrily off, tried another gentleman, the elongated lobe of whose ear was stretched enormously to accommodate a battered cigarette tin, of which he was obviously proud.

"Hapana, memsahib!" She could have slapped the smile-bulged cheeks this time.

Two women she tried next, then a half grown boy, jingled money before his greedy eyes.

"Hapana mensahib . . ."

She gave it up then, set her shoulders squarely, tilted her chin high in the air and strode off without a backward glance at the murmuring crowd behind.

Some 20 yards of the plain she covered before they were about her, surrounding her in a crushing circle, faces still smiling in a kind of gentle apology.

"Hapana, memsahib!"

No! No! No! How she hated the repetition of that wretched negative; She tried to force her way through the barrier of brown bodies that hedged her round on every side, even battled with angry clenched fists against them, cried out shrill imprecation upon them, but, quietly, doggedly, they closed around her, edging her back to the hut she had left, till she realized that, no matter how she commanded and battled, the will of this smiling tribe was inexorable. To them she came. With them she must remain!

Several other times that morning she tried the maneuver of striding nonchalantly out toward the plain. Some 50 yards they would allow her to proceed, then would come that same gentle surge of bodies round her, that inexorable bearing her back toward the dwelling places.

She gave it up at last. Reasoning, cajoleries, nothing would move them. Quite good naturedly, quite politely,

they met her tempting offers with gentle negative.

She withdrew to her tent at last, puzzled and angry. She could read no meaning in the attitude of these people into whose hands she had fallen. Obviously they bore her no ill will. Their demeanor held all due respect. The money upon her was apparently safe. Evidently they had relieved her of her rifle only in case she might use it to clear a way for herself.

She ceased puzzling at length, consoled herself with the reflection that, sooner or later, something must happen. These people could not keep her forever. She was no use to them---merely an incumbrance.

The day drew on to sleepy afternoon.

"Wapi, memsahib," the voice that cut across the heat-wrapped air brought Richenda to her feet with

one bound, fingers dug deep into her palms, eyes wide with amazement. Was there no escaping this man?

(Continued in Tomorrow's Star.)

INSTALLMENT XLV.

A Gruesome Encounter.

OF what strange, devil-given instinct was Fairways possessed that this second time he could track Richenda down with so little delay? Relief that she was to be freed from this strange captivity was tempered by the realization that she would but go back to that old captivity from which she had broken away.

She went to meet him, cheeks a little pale, brows drawn together in a contemptuous frown. Behind him stood the native boy Jeroge.

Fairways cast but one glance at

"THE SIMBA SLEEPS IN THE BUSHES, BWANA."

her, sweeping her from crown to feet with a movement of his head. Then he turned to the crowd of natives around him, summoned the chieftain of the dog tooth necklace and tendered him a handful of loose silver. turned an unheeding shoulder against those other palms that shot out instantly before him and approached Richenda.

"Come along," he said tersely.

She followed him without a word. She felt curiously helpless. It was impossible to refuse to obey his order. She could not remain behind with these people who had held her captive.

Twenty yards from the camp she halted as sudden remembrance came back to her.

"Those brutes have my rifle. They stole it."

Fairways gave a short laugh.

"You'll find it in your own tent."

She stared at him in dumb amazement.

"But, but——" she began.

"Well, if you must know, Jeroge was the thief!"

"Jeroge!" Her eyes shot fire at the grinning boy.

"Since you apparently did your level best to pump every bullet you possessed into him last evening, one can scarcely blame the fellow for doing his best to 'draw your sting.'"

Light dawned upon her.

"Do you mean to tell me," she demanded, "that Jeroge tracked me down like that?"

"I don't," he answered. "There was no 'tracking' about it. He never lost sight of you from the first moment you left the camp. He merely followed some fifty or sixty yards behind you, and, when he thought your escapade had proceeded far enough and that you were getting scared, he came closer, meaning to bring you back to the encampment by a shorter, less dangerous, way. Then, according to his dramatic account, you immediately turned upon him with blood-curdling yells and did your best to send him winging up to Paradise!"

She gave vent to a little giggle.

"I think the 'blood curdling yells' came from Jeroge's imagination and Jeroge's mouth in equal proportion!" she said.

"At any rate, he was venturing no further within reach of your undependable rifle."

"Was it by Jeroge's orders that those wretches held me prisoner?"

"Of course it was," he answered shortly. "Jeroge is convinced you are mad as a hatter. 'Bitten by the sun,' he calls it. He can imagine no other reason for a woman to go galloping off into the forest like that. To him it points clearly to sheer lack of sense. He is not far off the mark either," he ended dryly.

She bit her lip. All her endeavor had gone for nothing! She was back at this man's side, his captive as before. She wondered vaguely how the thing would end.

Fairways' explanation shed the light of understanding now on many things that had puzzled her.

Those kindly smiling creatures they had left behind had thought her mad, not fit to be allowed to wander out alone. So they had kept her, guarded her till Jeroge, who went off to summon his master as soon as dawn had made the return journey safe, should reappear with Fairways to relieve them of their charge.

And Fairways had set a native boy to watch her! Her cheeks burned with the insult of it. To what low position had she sunk that he dared degrade her in the eyes of an elemental servant!

Jeroge, following behind, wondered vaguely at the vicious glance she shot back across her shoulder at him.

Truly, he reflected complacently, he had done well. "Look after the memsahib. See that no harm comes to her." The bwana had said that. And he had obeyed the order, had seen

that she was safely kept. Well it was for him that he had done this. He shuddered to think what would have happened had the bwana returned to the camp and found the memsahib lost. Surely then Jeroge's brown back would have suffered sorely, for white men, in anger, were not light of hand!

And the memsahib was truly bitten of the sun . . . sick in the head. Now, had she been his, Jeroge's wife, he would forthwith have sent her back to her people, demanding the return of the goats which he had given for her. Then he would have taken another damsel whose head was sound.

They were walking in silence across low bushed rolling plain now. Richenda noticed that Fairways' face was drawn and white. He looked very tired.

"How is the man who was hurt by the rhino?" she asked him haltingly.

"Dead," he replied shortly. "At 9 o'clock this morning."

She fell silent. So that was why he appeared fatigued. He had been up all night with the dying man. No doubt he had conducted the primitive funeral which, as in all tropic countries, would take place within a few hours of the death. Then, straightway, without a moment's rest, he tramped miles across the country in search of a decamping wife. Truly, for Fairways, it had been a crowded 24 hours.

They walked on without any further word passing between them.

It was a quick warning from Jeroge that brought them to a sudden halt. The native was pointing agitatedly at a clump of low brushes not five yards from where they stood. Three or four tattered rags of gaudy muslin were fluttering from the thorny branches and, close by, a rough hide-fashioned native shoe lay on the edge of a patch of black-stained earth.

Their eyes took the objects in, then went farther to where more sinister things lay scattered upon the withered grass.

"My godfathers!" Fairways' whisper was barely audible and Richenda, standing frozen with horror, could only stare at one hideous thing which brought home its grewsome tale to her.

A slender wire girt arm it was, cut short below the elbow, the slim little fingers still stretched rigid in the terror which had been upon them when they died. It lay there calling them to read its tragedy.

"The simba sleeps in the bushes, bwana," came Jeroge's murmur an inch from Fairways' ear.

(Continued Tuesday.)

INSTALLMENT XLVI.

A Struggle to the Death.

BUT the lioness was not asleep. She was covertly watching them from behind that thick green screen which hid her shadowy fawn body from their sight. Other eyes, too, were watching—wide amber baby eyes that had not yet learned to avoid these strange creatures which stood so near at hand, and the breeze carried away any scent which might have warned the owner of those very young eyes that here lay danger.

In spite of a low grumble of dissent

THE TIME SEEMED ENDLESS TO RICHENDA AS SHE SAT BY THE SIDE OF THE STILL UNCONSCIOUS MAN.

from the crouching mother, the small lion cub wriggled mischievously out of reach of her punishment-dealing paw and insinuated his fat young body through the leafy barrier with little yelps of joy. He had already forgotten the first objects of his desire for movement. The shapeless fleshy nose was wrinkled upon a scent that had grown familiar but a couple of hours before. The pink tongue hung dribbling with greedy salivia from his mouth.

He wobbled from behind the screen of bushes full into the sight of the three humans.

Fairways' lips compressed into a thin line. A lioness and cubs—a retrograde female thing! Not the usual ancient, half blind brute that takes to man killing merely to save itself from the starvation which would follow on its repeated failures to obtain the fleeter creatures that had before provided food for it, but a lioness with cubs—a young, lithe, crafty beast, cunning with the guile that nature gives to the mother creature. Fairways knew he would need all his skill.

The baby was full before them now, mouthing at that slender tragic arm with toothless gums.

A second later a small sister had joined it, and, following the lead of the disobedient young pair, whose

gratified little growlings came upon its ears, a third fat infant tottered to the forbidden sport.

And the mother, moving silently from bush to bush, distracted at the danger which threatened her offspring, was deciding, with the cunning of the wild, from which point the spring she must take upon these human enemies had best come.

From the moment when the scene of the tragedy had first come to their eyes barely sixty seconds had passed.

"Don't move!" Fairways had thrown the brief command to the girl.

She had hesitated a moment. The small opening where they stood was almost encircled in straggling bushes, any one of which might hide the thing she feared. The impulse to run died away as she realized this, and she drew closer to the man at her side.

It was from a spot barely ten yards away that the big tawny body hurtled through the air upon them. Soundless as a streak of lightning it came straight to where Richenda stood between itself and Fairways. His gun swung up as she leaped aside with a startled scream. His bullet, hastily aimed, brought a gush of blood across that golden hide, an

agonized madness into the fury which already held the raging brute, a reverberating roar from those terrible open jaws.

The lioness and man were a tumbling heap upon the ground—a dreadful, bloodstained, panting, writhing mass, and—barely a moment later—a quietly trembling something that subsided into stillness amid a rapidly widening pool of sinister redness that spread slimily across the ground around them.

Richenda, shaken from her paralysis of sheer horror, shrieked till the countryside re-echoed as she covered the yards to where Jeroge was pluckily dragging the scarce dead body of the lioness from the prostrate man.

The fawn babies had fled into the bushes with whines of fear.

'Fairways' eyes were closed, his bloodstained face ashen. From shoulder to cuff a shirt sleeve was torn in ribbons. The blood pumped jetting from a slashed artery in one wrist, flooding Richenda in its stream.

She was not screaming now. Fingers and brain were laboring too swiftly to give in to the faintness

that had threatened for one brief moment to overwhelm her. Memories of things she had learned during those far-off days of war, when she worked as V. A. D. in hospitals full of battered men, came back to her. The spurting artery she stopped with a hurriedly fashioned tourniquet. Rough bandages she constructed by tearing strips from the assorted garments of herself and Fairways, by even demanding the khaki cotton shirt from Jeroge's own brown back, shuddering mentally all the while at the realization that only the most sterile things should be laid upon those open, bleeding wounds.

Then she turned upon her anxious, willing helper.

"You must go to Abmani and bring help, Jeroge. Find white people—a doctor—mission bwanas, and make them come quickly with a stretcher!"

He was off without a moment's delay, leaving her alone with the injured

man, the body of the dead lioness lying out in the glaring sunshine not 10 yards away from the shade of the bush under which they had placed Brett Fairways.

From somewhere behind came the whining of the lonely cubs.

The time seemed endless to Richenda as she sat by the side of the still unconscious man. There was now so little she could do but wait . . . and that very waiting was purgatory itself to her.

Fairways' quiet face had fallen into the gentler lines that she had known in those brief days of courtship over a month ago. A soft half-smile sat upon his faintly parted lips. She sat looking down upon that face, marveling how unconsciousness could wipe out every line of domination and self-will. Sleep, too, she remembered, could do that . . . and death.

Her breath came a little faster then. Death . . . One hand fluttered suddenly to where she could feel the faint rise and fall of his breast under the stained, torn shirt. Death . . . What if? . . . She forced the thought away with a little shudder.

In another moment it was back; insinuating itself upon her again.

Came another thought. This man had loved her. Love . . . too precious a thing to scorn in a world that proffers it so rarely. But she had scorned it—flung it back in his face with condemning words.

(Continued in Thursday's Star.)

SHUDDERS OF PAIN RAN THROUGH HIM AS SHE MOVED HIM.

INSTALLMENT XLVII.

Brett's Explanation.

RICHENDA had expected the man of her dreams to come to her with a spotless past behind him. How many women in the world of today could hope for that? He had come to her like a child scared of the mischief it had wrought the hour before, frightened to tell, yet longing for understanding, sympathy, forgiveness and a new beginning.

Men were always children. "The true woman is mother as well as wife to the man she loves." Suddenly Richenda remembered that a wise aunt of her girlhood had once said that.

But she had done her best to send Fairways from her heart with fierce words—dismissing him back to the past out of which she might have lifted him into new happiness.

And now he lay at her feet, that tender, boyish softness upon his parted lips . . . helpless, hers to care for or to leave—as she wished.

Her hand was on his heart again when she suddenly discovered that his eyes were opened full, bent on her with a queer half-humorous gaze.

She held the flask of brandy to his lips, crooking an arm under his head to raise it till he could sip the amber fluid. Shudders of pain ran through him as she moved him, a shadowy grayness stole again across his face, but still the twinkling laughter lurked in those narrowed eyes.

"You'll . . . be . . . able . . . to make . . . your getaway . . . quite safely now . . . Dickie," his voice was oddly cracked.

"Oh, hush, hush! I——"

"That's . . . if . . . I don't . . . make mine . . . first."

The grim laughter crept from eyes to lips as he slipped back into unconsciousness again.

It was some 15 minutes later that she heard his voice again. "Dickie"—the name came with something of its old intonation from his lips—"Dickie, may I . . . explain?"

"Not now," she whispered. "Later on, when you are strong again, then——"

"There might not be any 'later on,'" he broke in. "I want to tell you . . . about Monica . . ." His voice failed him suddenly and she lifted the brandy to his seeking lips.

"Don't worry, Brett. Tell me afterwards," she implored.

"Monica didn't . . . play . . . the

game. She wasn't built . . for faithfulness. She . . . carried on with other men . . . And when I was . . . going to . . . divorce her I found that . . . out of sheer spite she meant to drag the name of another woman into court . . . to couple it with mine . . . A good woman, married, who was nothing more than a close friend to me, but whose husband was that sort of . . . jealous swine that would put her through hell if the faintest tinge of scandal . . . came to him."

His voice was stronger now, tense with indignant memory.

"Monica knew there was nothing wrong between Elizabeth and me . . . knew that the mention of her name in court would ruin Elizabeth, even

though her innocence would be quite clear. That husband of hers . . . would always eye her with suspicion. Elizabeth came to me distracted . . . and, for her sake, I did the thing Monica had reckoned I would do—I . . . stopped the divorce proceedings.

"After that I . . .. went away . . . went off the track a bit . . . didn't care much about anything . . .

soured, bitter . . . came across Lucille . . . thought nothing mattered. It was when I knew I had begun to love you, Dickie, that I got the news of Monica's death . . . in a motor smash."

He finished the story with words that were halting and faint. She heard how, if Lucille had realized he were free to marry again, she would have done her best to separate him from Richenda.

"I never realized the sheer evil of her . . . till I saw the game she meant to play against you, Dickie. Powers above, the things that greed for money will lead such women to!

But I dared not speak till I'd got you safely mine . . . she'd have told you things . . . made them seem even worse than they were . . . and that was bad enough in all conscience"—the half grim smile was on his lips again—— "I meant to make a clean breast of it to you afterwards . . . thought I could make you understand. But you heard too soon, took the bit between your teeth, Dickie . . . didn't give me much of a chance. I suppose the roots of your love hadn't had time to grow down very deep.

"I knew if I let you get away then you'd be lost to me forever. Hate grew even quicker than love, didn't

it? I hung on to you, hoping that, by and by, you'd . . . calm down—I'm a clumsy devil . . . might have managed things a bit more cleverly . . . blundered all along the line . . . I see that now . . . couldn't expect a girl like you . . . to settle down comfortably to sheer captivity. But when a man loves a woman, so that he feels the pain of her scorning . . . right through to his very soul, he gets . . . all panicky lest he . . . lose her. I got like that, Dickie, maybe Providence . . . is . . . going to . . . set you free of me . . . pretty soon now. I've a sort of hunch that——"

"Oh, Brett, Brett, don't——" she was sobbing now.

"But anyway, you needn't worry any more. I'll never hold you against your . . . will . . . again. Those roots, Dickie, the roots of love . . . they Hadn't grown down deep enough in you. Perhaps . . . the . . . soil . . . was too young . . . too shallow . . ." A little gasping sigh, a flickering of the eyelids, and he was silent.

She bent forward, the quick tears chasing down her quivering cheeks: "Brett, listen——"

"Too young . . . too . . . shallow. . . ." The faint words came

mechanically from the lips of the man who was again beyond the sound of her voice, slipping into muttering delirium. "Too . . . shallow."

Suddenly she felt that something of just condemnation lay in the words of that odd whisper.

It was a few minutes later that she heard a hail from across the plain and, jumping to her feet, discovered the welcome form of Jeroge speeding towards her, accompanied by two white men. She was amazed at his quick return.

(Continued in Saturday's Star.)

XLVIII.

Brett's One Chance.

IN AN incredibly short space of time the Englishmen had placed the unconscious form of Fairways upon an improvised stretcher formed from the removable khaki hood of a motor car.

"Our 'bus is on the road a mile away," one of them told her. "We guessed we'd have to carry the poor chap across the veld till we got to more even going. He'd be shaken to bits if we tried to drive him over this. So we thought it best to leave the car at the nearest convenient spot. We picked up your boy on the road half way to Abmani and drove back here as quickly as we could."

Fairways, sprawled limply on the ancient hood of the car, had ceased his muttered delirium. He was quiet. Too quiet, Richenda thought as she gazed with strained eyes upon him. She almost welcomed the little moan that broke from him when one of the stretcher bearers stumbled over a heaped clump of grass.

They reached the waiting car at length and arranged their burden as comfortably as the cramped space al-

lowed. Fairways was past speech now, past caring what happened around him.

"The poor devil has had a hell of a mauling," whispered one of the men to his companion. "I shouldn't think he's got a dog's chance of pulling through. That little wife of his looks as though she can't hold out much longer, either."

"Too young . . . too shallow." The words were beating through Richenda's brain to the tune of something that rattled loosely inside the vitals of the car to the rhythm of the humming wheels.

Suddenly she felt no longer young,

"TRANSFUSION," HE TOLD HER.

but very old . . . old as age itself looking back through the mists of time and marking the past mistakes of youth. Then she knew that, if she could set feet and heart back on the path they had trodden a month before she would quell the hot, angry spirit that had sent her off at a raging tangent, careless of all but the hurt that was her own.

"Oh, life, that rarely grants a fresh beginning . . ." The words of a forgotten song came back to her. "Oh, life, that rarely grants a fresh beginning . . ."

And suddenly Richenda realized that, of all things on earth, she wanted a fresh beginning . . . with Brett Fairways by her side so that, together, they might build on the new foundation something even better, more understandingly tender than she had before imagined.

A month ago she had given him a heart filled in every corner with consuming love. Then hate and indignation had suddenly swirled across that heart, crowding out all softer influences. But one couldn't go on hating a helpless man . . . a man who had bared his very soul to her. Hate—

distrust—there was nothing left for them to feed on, they had faded away as quickly as they had come, leaving their abiding place empty. Just for a brief space empty, then, stealing slowly, half frightened, till, growing bolder, it quickened to an overwhelming rush. back into that vacant heart came love.

She sat upright by the side of the unconscious man, one hand on his, the little sobs battling in her throat.

They reached Abmani at last and Fairways was moved into the small mission hospital. The time that she

lingered in a room below the operating theater seemed interminable to Richenda, but at length the doctor came to her again. A little strained and set in face he was, a little slow of tongue. She realized he was trying to spare her the shock of bad news that came too suddenly.

"Speak out," she told him. "It is . . . pretty bad, isn't it?"

"Yes, Mrs. Fairways," he admitted then, "three ribs broken by the weight of that brute, a terrible loss of blood with attendant weakness, and I doubt very much whether we can get him through without signs of septic poisoning. You see, the claws of these brutes are always full of decaying matter, and then . . . . the bandages . . ."

Richenda sighed. In these days of sterile surgery she realized how the sight of those bandages—Jeroge's shirt and her own underwear—must have shocked the precise little doctor with his experience of this land, where flesh went septic on the smallest prov-

ocation, and laid many a strong young body at the gate of death.

He was smiling with forced cheerfulness now, patting her hand gently.

"Mrs. Fairways, I had to tell you how matters were. It wouldn't have been kind to lead you into false security. He is bad—very bad, but there is yet a chance that we may be able to pull him through!"

But she saw by their faces during the next two days that the chance of which the doctor had spoken was growing smaller every hour. Into Fairways' room she went but rarely. The sight of that quiet, unconscious figure on the bed was almost more than she could bear. If only she could speak to him, make him understand the things she was burning to tell him! If, for one moment, they could blot out the memory of the bitter words that she had hurled at him in the anger that was now quite dead! If they could only recapture for a lightning moment the golden rapture of those days a month ago! If she could feel that he had gone out to that strange Beyondland, for which his sails were set, knowing that she was more truly his than ever before! If only . . .

"Oh, life, that rarely grants a fresh beginning . . ." The little devils of tormenting remorse sent the line of the song back into her mind again, each word digging like a knife thrust into her very soul.

Next day the face of the little doctor was graver than ever.

"There is just one chance left for him, Mrs. Fairways," he told her. "You see, this terrible bloodlessness is the thing that is pulling him back. He lost enough of the stuff to kill most ordinary men outright. The only thing for us to do is to replace it as well as we can."

"You mean?"

"Transfusion," he told her. "I'd have suggested it before, but the trouble is to lay hands on the right person for the job."

(Continued in Monday's Star.)

INSTALLMENT XLIX.

Two Ghosts.

THE little doctor told Richenda that a transfusion operation was Brett's one chance of recovering.

"I scarcely dare try MacFarlane or Smythe or even Harrison. The first two are soaked in malaria as it is, and we don't want to inoculate a patient with that straight away, and I doubt if the latter can spare any of his own blood. He is weedy as a half-

GARY.

starved rat already. We might, of course, get somebody from the township, but one should have people under observation for a while before one decides to pour strange blood into a sick man's veins."

A worried frown ruffled his anxious brow.

"But, doctor," she cried impetuously, "why should you look farther than me? I'm here, quite strong and healthy. If Brett needs blood he must have mine. I'd hate to think that anybody else——"

He broke in upon her, clicking a dubious tongue. "I don't know that you'd stand it. It's grueling experience and——"

"I've got to stand it." Her eyes were shining now. Here, at last, was something she could do, something she might suffer for him. "And you've got to do it. Now, without a moment's delay! I insist!" She ended with voice quivering with pulsing eagerness. "You've got to do it. . . ."

Richenda had her way. After all, reflected the anxious little man, it was the only way.

It was on the third occasion when she sat by Fairways' side, the blood draining slowly from her arm down the long tube that lay between them, that the hazel eyes opened and met hers with a gaze of puzzled questioning.

"Quite still, old man," the doctor warned in a commanding whisper.

"Richenda, what——"

She frowned him into silence. "Do as you are told, bad boy," she smiled. "Not another word!"

He lay watching her quietly till the strange performance was completed. Then, as the meaning of it came home to him, his lips opened to speak again. But the two helpers, seeing something of the sudden weakness which had descended upon Richenda, were getting her out of the room as speedily as possible.

"I don't think she can go through it again," said an anxious nurse to the little doctor a while later.

"He won't need it, thank Heaven!" he returned with great contentment.

It was seven days afterwards before Richenda saw Fairways again, seven days during which she lay in her bed fighting the weakness which had come upon her till she was able to drag herself to her feet again, a wan Richenda, whose big dark eyes shone with a strange, unaccustomed softness.

"Two ghosts! She looks worse than he does!" whispered MacFarlane to the little nurse.

The slim white ghost in the doorway moved quietly over to the gaunt

white ghost on the bed. But the eyes of both were burning, hungering human eyes.

Nurse and doctor stole from the room, closing the door behind them.

"Dickie," came the voice that had never thrilled Richenda more than now. "Oh, Dickie, you couldn't have done that—put your very blood into my veins—if you had hated me so much! The doctor told me how you stormed, insisted, even wept till he gave in.

"Dickie, won't you do something else now? I've been a brute, I know, but if you will give me another chance

perhaps I shall be able to teach you to forget. . . ."

Her hands were on him now, trembling lips coming closer to his own.

"Brett," she whispered, flushing to a delightful pink, "I'd rather that you taught me to remember, taught me to love you all over again, but heart o' mine, I don't need . . . any lessons."

(THE END.)